

“Forging Ahead” in Banes, Cuba *Garveyism in a United Fruit Company Town*

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Abstract

In the early 1920s, British West Indians in Banes, Cuba, built one of the world's most successful branches of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in the heart of the world-famous United Fruit Company's sugar-export enclave in Cuba. This article explores the day-to-day function of the UNIA in Banes in order to investigate closely the relationship between British West Indian migration and Garveysim and, in particular, between Garvey's movement and powerful employers of mobile West Indian labor. It finds that the movement achieved great success in Banes (and in other company towns) by meeting the very specific needs of its members as black workers laboring in sites of U.S. hegemony. Crucially, the UNIA survived, and even thrived, in a company town by taking a pragmatic approach to its dealings with the company.

Keywords

African diaspora – Cuba – Garveyism – British West Indian migration – United Fruit Company

In March 1921, Marcus Garvey, president general of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), visited the town of Banes on the northern coast of Cuba's Oriente Province. Upon hearing the news of his imminent arrival, officers of the local UNIA branch, Division #52, hastily made arrangement to ensure a smooth trip for their organization's leader. Four UNIA officers and three leaders of the women's auxiliary group, the Black Cross Nurses, met Garvey in the nearby town of Dumois, escorting him and his personal secretary to Banes in a special railcar secured for the occasion. As the group made their way toward town, a large crowd gathered outside of the town's largest hall,

El Teatro Heredia, chosen for Garvey's speech because Liberty Hall, the usual UNIA meeting place, would not have accommodated the hundreds planning to attend the evening's festivities. That afternoon, the Black Cross Nurses stood to attention in their crisp, white uniforms while Garvey greeted and shook hands with admirers and well-wishers. When the time came for the mass meeting, the Black Cross Nurses led a formal procession into the theater, followed by the Division #52 officer corps and, finally, Marcus Garvey himself. The Cuban national anthem and an opening address by division president Egbert Newton were followed by no fewer than a dozen presentations by enthusiastic UNIA members before the president general finally addressed the audience on the state of "the population of Negroes everywhere" and the goals of his association.¹

Months later, Garvey remembered the visit as a tremendous success. In July, he told a New York audience that he sold thousands of dollars' worth of stock in the UNIA's shipping company, the Black Star Line (BSL), during his brief stay in town and that "hundreds and thousands" of people had paid the dollar entry fee to see him speak (Hill 1984:533). In fact, Garvey wasn't the first international UNIA representative to stop over in Banes; only a month earlier the UNIA chaplain-general, Reverend George Alexander McGuire, had "electrified" packed audiences in the Banes Liberty Hall for five straight nights and raised four thousand dollars in BSL stock.² That such high-profile dignitaries from the Harlem headquarters of the world's largest black organization visited Banes attests to the tremendous popularity and success of the UNIA in town and to the town's leading role in the black internationalism crystallizing in the Caribbean during the interwar years. Indeed, Banes was home to one of the Caribbean's strongest and most active chapters of Garvey's transnational black-uplift association.

Founded in early 1920, the Banes division of the UNIA, like most branches of the organization in the Hispanic Caribbean and Central America, took root among British West Indians who had traveled to participate in U.S.-led economic growth. In Banes, this vibrant *antillano* population largely labored for the United Fruit Company or one of its subsidiary divisions, as the world-famous multinational corporation headquartered its Cuban operations in town. United Fruit had transformed Banes from a sleepy harbor town into a

1 Robert S.F. Blake, A Message from Banes, Oriente, Cuba, *Negro World*, April 16, 1921; Banes Division Welcomes Hon. Marcus Garvey, *Negro World*, April 30, 1921.

2 Blake, Banes Division, UNIA & ACL, *Negro World*, March 26, 1921; Blake, A Message from Banes, *Negro World*, April 16, 1921.

hub of capital, migration, and sugar production for export in the first decades of the twentieth century. By the time Garvey visited in early 1921, the region surrounding the Banes and Nipe bays on the northern coast of Cuba's Oriente Province was one of the most productive sugar enclaves in the world and one of the most concentrated zones of U.S. economic imperialism in the Americas.

As a proliferation of scholarship on what Emory Tolbert has called "out-post Garveysim" has recently demonstrated, the UNIA was especially popular among those British West Indians who were well-traveled.³ In fact, the organization experienced greater local participation in destinations of *antillano* immigration than in the British West Indies themselves. Cuba was second only to the United States in its number of chapters, while the Hispanic-American countries of Panama and Costa Rica each had more chapters than any British-ruled island except Trinidad, which was in fact a receiving island for many migrants.⁴ In this rapidly transitioning world of rising U.S. hegemony and vast labor migration, the UNIA also flourished in the United Fruit Company's Central American banana export enclaves, including Puerto Limón, Costa Rica, and Bocas del Toro, Panama, as well as the canal terminals of Colón and Panama City. Along with the UNIA branches in these sites, the Banes division of the UNIA thrived through the 1920s and into the 1930s, outlasting many of its North American counterparts.⁵ This article takes a microhistorical approach to the question of why the Garvey movement was so successful in company towns by

3 Tolbert 1975. Until recently, only a handful of scholars had specifically investigated Garveyism in the greater Caribbean. Those early works include Burnett 2005, Fernández Robaina 1998, Giovannetti 2001, Lewis 1988, and McLeod 2000, as well as a special edition of *Caribbean Studies* 31, no. 1, 2003). In the last few years, however, scholarship on grassroots Garveyism has taken off. See, among others, Dalrymple 2008, Ewing 2011, Leeds 2010, and Vinson 2012. For an excellent overview of the sometimes unique, sometimes shared characteristics of Garveyism in the greater Caribbean, see the country profiles in the latest volume of Robert Hill's *Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*. All of the authors describe, in greater or lesser detail, the movement's strong appeal to those West Indians sojourning away from home (Hill et al. 2011).

4 In the mid-1920s, there were 725 UNIA chapters in the United States and 271 chapters outside of the United States, with Cuba hosting the most (at least 52 chapters), followed by Panama (47), Trinidad (30), Costa Rica (23), Canada (15), and Jamaica (11). See Divisions of the UNIA, 1925–1927, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture New York NY; UNIA Central Division Records, Reel 1, Box 2, A16.

5 For histories of the movement in each of these UNIA hubs, see the country Costa Rica and Panama profiles in Hill et al. 2011 as well as Burnett 2005, Harpelle 2003, and Zumoff 2013.

exploring the day-to-day functioning of the UNIA in Banes. Investigating Division #52 sheds light on this international panorama of grassroots Garveyism during the height of the movement's international dynamism in the 1920s and reveals that the organization's remarkable success was due, in part, to its flexibility and adaptability to local circumstances. Members built an organizational infrastructure well suited to meet the distinct needs of mobile black workers laboring in sites of U.S. hegemony. In company towns like Banes, their ability to do so was based in part on a pragmatic relationship with large employers of West Indian labor such as the United Fruit Company, a mutual understanding that allowed the organization to survive, and even thrive, despite repressive labor conditions and overwhelming power discrepancies.

Economic Expansion, Labor Migration, and Garveyism in the U.S.-Caribbean World⁶

Outward expansion was nothing new for the United States after a century spent conquering native lands, annexing Mexican territory, and filibustering in Central America. Yet, U.S. military, political, and economic intervention in the Americas reached new heights at the turn of the twentieth century. The 1898 Spanish-American-Cuban War, followed by the U.S. annexation of Puerto Rico and occupation of Cuba, launched the United States' ascendancy in the greater Caribbean, marked (only in part) by the creation of the U.S.-controlled Panama Canal Zone in 1903; military invasions of Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras; and occupations of the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Nicaragua. Concomitant with military action and political influence was, of course, economic expansion, exemplified by the large agricultural export corporations that set up shop across the region, especially the United Fruit Company. Founded in an 1899 merger of two tropical trading companies, United Fruit quickly went on to acquire vast tracts of land and build extensive rail networks in the Caribbean, Central America, and along the Caribbean coast of South America. The company became known as *el pulpo*, or the octopus, for its tentacles stretching across the Americas.⁷

6 Frank Guridy (2010:7–9) uses the term “US-Caribbean World” to describe a transnational space rooted in the circum-Caribbean, marked by U.S. hegemony, and united by interconnected and crisscrossing networks of trade, cultural exchange, and migration.

7 For histories of the United Fruit Company, see Adams 1914, Colby 2011, Dosál 1993, May & Plaza Lasso 1958, Striffler 2002, and United Fruit Company 1944.

As it did elsewhere, U.S. military might supported the company's expansion in Cuba. Rather than rehabilitate Cuban production, U.S. occupying powers encouraged foreign investment, particularly in Cuba's eastern provinces of Camagüey and Oriente, which had been wiped out during Cuba's thirty-year independence struggle. In 1899, United Fruit purchased a banana plantation near Banes, converted to sugar production, and set about building a "self-contained enterprise"—a highly efficient, closed society, celebrated for its "magnitude of operations" and modern production standards.⁸ By the mid-1920s, United Fruit had constructed two massive mills, Boston and Preston, and owned over 280,000 U.S. acres of land, five hundred miles of railroad lines comprising the entirety of the vicinity's rail network, two hospitals, two shipping ports, several electrical plants, water treatment facilities, firehouses, warehouses, commissaries, dairies, bakeries, churches, schools, and housing facilities.⁹ United Fruit even owned the land upon which local police stations and courthouses stood, as the company's Banes-Nipe territory came to epitomize foreign-dominated agro-export enclaves in Latin America.¹⁰

To meet its significant need for field and factory labor, a demand that could not be filled by displaced Cuban peasants alone, United Fruit's managers in Cuba imported workers principally from Haiti and Jamaica (Casey 2011; Pérez Nakao 2007). By 1920, the company imported approximately 3,000 Jamaican and Haitian field laborers annually through its private port at Nipe as well as through Antilla, over which it exerted significant control (Giovannetti 2001:52–53; Pérez Nakao 2007:70). Some 600,000 *antillano* workers arrived on the island during the first third of the twentieth century (McLeod 1998:599).¹¹ Between the push of British imperial decline and the pull of American ascendancy in the region, this pattern was replicated across the Caribbean, as Afro-Caribbean migrants dug the Panama Canal, harvested Central American bananas, cut

8 Reynolds 1924:15, 18. See also Adams 1914:297; A. James 1976:107; Santamaría García & Malamud 2001:246; Zanetti & García 1976:53–56, 62, 78–79.

9 "Boston" and "Preston," *Manual azucarero de Cuba/Gilmore's Cuba sugar manual 1927–8* 1928; United Fruit Company 1944; Secretaria de Agricultura, *Zafra de 1934, memoria anual*, 1934, pp. 70–71.

10 A classic Cuban account of the United Fruit Company in Cuba is Zanetti & García 1976.

11 Many workers included in this figure returned home after the sugar harvest. Until relatively recently only a handful of scholars carefully examined Caribbean immigration to Cuba. For older examples, see Pérez de la Riva 1979 and Álvarez Estévez 1988. More recently, however, several authors have addressed the subject of *antillano* immigration to Cuba (Chomsky 2000; Giovannetti 2001; McLeod 1998).

cane in Cuba, and labored in Venezuelan oil fields.¹² American employers found these “third-country laborers,” from neither the host nation nor the United States, to be ideal workers. Unprotected by local governments, lacking in nearby kinship networks, and dependent on the company for even their most basic needs, imported workers were thought to be isolated and less inclined to participate in labor disturbances (Conniff 1985: 176–78; Langley & Schoonover 1995:24). Indeed, private employers deliberately segmented distinct racial and ethnic groups of laborers in order to discourage worker solidarity (Bourgois 1989; Colby 2011). Yet, the history of the Garvey movement demonstrates that British West Indian immigrants were far from isolated as they built the largest black organization in world history.

It was in these U.S. imperial enclaves, or what historian Winston James (2011:450) has called “black contact zones,” that the UNIA thrived. As preeminent scholar of Garveyism Robert Hill (2011:lxix) and others have pointed out, British West Indians on the move “served as the key vector in spreading the message of Garveyism.” Across the greater Caribbean, the growth of the UNIA was synonymous with West Indian immigration, as Antillean migrants built and spread an organization distinctly suited to meet their needs as mobile black workers laboring in sites of racial subjugation and U.S. hegemony. The organization facilitated a strong sense of unity among heterogeneous West Indians across differences in insular origins, class, and even skin shades.¹³ Additionally, it offered a consistent set of rituals and experiences—from singing the Ethiopian national anthem to pageants and parades—that could be easily replicated across the region. Through their regular contributions to the “News and Views of UNIA Divisions” section of the organizational mouthpiece, the *Negro World*, West Indian migrants assured one another that, should they have to pick up and leave in search of work, they were likely to find a welcoming and familiar community in their next destination. Ultimately, the UNIA was “both a product and a catalyst” of increasing black diasporic interaction and communication in the 1920s (Guridy 2010:63).

12 Lara Putnam has written extensively and beautifully on the international circuits of British West Indian migrants. For just a few examples, see Putnam 2011a, 2011b, and 2013.

13 Garvey often spoke of the importance of black unity. See, for example, Hon. Marcus Garvey Electrifies Audience at Panama Prospective Chapter of the UNIA, *Negro World*, June 4, 1921, pp. 1, 5; Hill 1984:384; Hill et al. 2011:66–75. Scholars have often suggested that much of the UNIA’s success is attributable to its unifying capacity; see, for example, Lewis 1988:63, 79.

Universal Negro Improvement Association Division #52

In early 1920, British West Indians laboring in Banes founded Universal Negro Improvement Association Division #52. The group received a boost thanks to widespread enthusiasm for the Black Star Line, which stopped over in Cuba in late 1919 and early 1920.¹⁴ Although visits from UNIA high officials, including Chaplain General McGuire and President General Garvey, in early 1921 also helped spread local membership, these international leaders found during their stays in Banes an already formed and operating branch of the UNIA. During his visit, McGuire dubbed Division #52 “the Model Division of Cuba” and Garvey referred to the town as “the great stronghold of the UNIA” after his own trip to the town.¹⁵ Indeed, Division #52 was one of the most prominent UNIA chapters in the greater Caribbean in terms of its membership numbers, its role as a regional leader of the organization, and its extensive interaction with the Harlem headquarters.

In Banes, as elsewhere in Cuba, the UNIA largely functioned as a mutual-aid society whose members paid dues toward sickness and death benefits, organized first-aid services, and provided relief in emergencies like floods and hurricanes. It was also a social organization with strong race-pride and uplift components, as Garveyites commemorated key moments in black history and established educational institutions. Division #52 held regular Sunday-night meetings and organized parades, dances, and pageants. Worldwide, but especially in Banes, UNIA organizers adeptly incorporated various members of local society into their organization through distinct auxiliary groups. Subgroups of Division #52 included the Black Cross Nurses; the African Legion, consisting of uniformed men who “maintained order within the society,” practiced militaristic drills, and marched in parades; the Motor Corps, who provided instruction in the maintenance of automotive vehicles; a band and a choir; and boy scouts.¹⁶

14 Reverend McGuire claimed immigrants in Cuba were some of the most enthusiastic investors in the BSL and, in Banes, both McGuire and Garvey raised significant funds for the line; see Hill 1984:532–45, and Hon. Rev. McGuire Speaks in Guantánamo, *Negro World*, March 19, 1921. Additionally, a representative from Banes reiterated his town's enthusiasm for the line at the UNIA international convention (Convention Report, New York, August 1922 in Hill 1985:876–77).

15 Blake, Banes Division, UNIA & ACL, *Negro World*, March 26, 1921; Hill 1984:533.

16 Reglamento de La Asociación Universal Para el Adelanto de la Raza Negro División No 52 de Banes and Asoc. Univ. para el Adelanto de la raza negra to Provincial Governor, July

Sizable numbers of rank-and-file members were seasonal mill or factory laborers, as reports from Banes to the *Negro World* often mentioned that members had left town in search of work.¹⁷ In the early 1920s, the organization's officer corps, however, was composed exclusively of skilled, semiskilled, and professional West Indians residing in the La Güira neighborhood of Banes (often referred to as Overtown, Jamaicatown, or Baneston, reflecting its predominance of English speakers). Although sugar companies and the Cuban state sought to keep immigrant workers strictly in sugar fields and mills in order to ensure a consistent labor supply and to avoid migrants becoming "public wards," British West Indians often moved beyond their designated roles and spaces.¹⁸ An internally diverse group with mixed migratory paths, *inglese*s arrived in Cuba with relatively high levels of literacy and education (94.5 percent of Jamaican migrants in the mid-1920s were literate, for instance) as well as previous work experience in skilled or semiskilled occupations. Perhaps most importantly, they were native speakers of English. All of this afforded them a degree of upward mobility in Cuba's American-dominated eastern sugar zone.¹⁹ UNIA leaders were teachers and shopkeepers, tradesmen and artisans working independently of United Fruit (such as tailors, watchmakers, and cobblers), and skilled workers laboring directly for the company or one of its subsidiaries (in positions such as coal stoker, train conductor, driver, mechanic, and bricklayer). Women officers, serving in positions like lady president and lady vice president were, with few exceptions, domestic

28, 1924, Archivo Histórico Provincial de Santiago de Cuba, Fondo: Gobierno Provincial (hereafter AHPSC Fondo-GP), Legajo (hereafter Leg.) 2452, Expediente (hereafter Exp.) 2; "All's Well in Banes, Cuba," *Negro World*, May 26, 1923. See also, Blake A Ringing Message From Banes, Oriente, Cuba, *Negro World*, April 14, 1923.

17 Blake, All's Well in Banes, Oriente, Cuba, *Negro World*, May 26, 1923; Blake, A Ringing Message from Banes, *Negro World*, April 14, 1923.

18 Documents relating to the solicitation of authorization by the administration of the *centrales* "Chapara" and "Delicias" in order to bring to this Republic through Puerto Padre 2000 immigrants from the British islands for the 1923–4 zafra, Archivo Nacional de Cuba (hereafter ANC), Havana Fondo Secretaria de Agricultura, Comercio, y Trabajo; Leg. 4, Exp. 45. In contrast to British subjects, Haitian immigrants, who were Creole speaking and largely uneducated, remained largely in rural employment. McLeod and Pérez de la Riva have analyzed the ways in which Haitian and British West Indian experiences in Cuba varied (Knight 1985; McLeod 1998; Pérez de la Riva 1979:11–13, 17–21, 27–29). For new research on Haitian immigration, see Casey 2011.

19 Giovannetti highlights the internal diversity of those often lumped together as "*inglese*s" or even "Jamaicans" (Giovannetti 2001:4–5).

servants working as cooks or housekeepers.²⁰ Sometimes president and sometimes chaplain, Robert S.F. Blake, a carpenter by trade, wrote to the *Negro World* in 1923, "In this division you will find men in all walks of life, men of the medical profession, engineers, tradesmen, mechanics, and others, all united, standing firm, with one watch-word 'a new and redeemed Africa.'" ²¹

The chapter maintained high membership numbers throughout the 1920s, reaching 300 members by April 1921 with "the 400 [mark] in view."²² In early 1921, under the leadership of acting president Egbert Newtown, the Banes Liberty Hall was expanded from a seating capacity of 300 to 500.²³ In contrast, most Cuban chapters suffered from a shortage of funds and functioned without a freestanding meeting place.²⁴ Official numbers in Banes remained in the hundreds by mid-decade, falling only with Cuba's economic decline beginning in 1925.²⁵ These figures, listed with the Cuban registry of associations, however, reflect only full-dues-paying members; for all practical purposes the UNIA reached many more, as its public events were designed specifically to involve the wider community.

Division #52 served as a regional leader within eastern Cuba and regularly sent its members across the region to assist other chapters and to act as representatives at special events hosted elsewhere.²⁶ In 1923 Banes Garveyites organized a regional meeting and invited delegates from across Oriente (including the cities of Santiago and Guantánamo, and the sugar mill towns of Miranda, Cueto, Cayo Mambí, Antilla, and San Geronimo) to a conference designed to "devise plans for closer relationships among divisions."²⁷ Additionally, Division #52 officers regularly played key roles within the UNIA's international leadership structure. Arnold S. Cummings, a prominent Garveyite in town, had been such a successful fundraiser that he was invited to attend the UNIA's 1920

20 See, Sociedad de instrucción y cultura Asociación Universal para el Adelanto de la Raza Negra División No 52 de Banes, AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 2 for several documents listing the officers, their names, and their professions in Banes.

21 Blake, A Ringing Message from Banes, *Negro World*, April 14, 1923.

22 Blake, A Ringing Message from Banes, *Negro World*, April 14, 1923.

23 UNIA in Banes, Cuba Forging Ahead, *Negro World*, February 26, 1921.

24 Dr. Alexander Given Ovation on Return, *Negro World*, March 19, 1921.

25 See AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 2. Unfortunately, membership numbers registered with the Cuban state are unavailable for the first half of the decade, making it impossible to crosscheck state and *Negro World* records.

26 See, for just two examples, Camagüey, Cuba, Elia No. 754, *Negro World*, October 10, 1925 and The Camagüey Division Holds Inspiring Meeting, *Negro World*, August 25, 1923.

27 Blake, All's Well in Banes, May 26, 1923.

International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World in New York, and he signed the organization's pioneering "Declaration of the Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World."²⁸ Cummings went on to serve as the personal secretary to Chaplain General McGuire during his tour of Cuba.²⁹ In 1921, he again attended the UNIA convention. Two of the four representatives from Cuba at that meeting were from Banes, indicating Division #52's significant leading role within the UNIA's Cuban arm.³⁰

Particularly enthusiastic supporters of the cause, Banes Garveyites fiercely defended the organization against criticism and often boasted of success in spreading the UNIA message, even when other chapters complained of slow or no organizing progress, a point exemplified in contrasting contributions to the *Negro World* in March of 1923.³¹ That month, the executive secretary of the Santiago de Cuba division reported on the status of his branch, lamenting the opposition the UNIA faced in Cuba's second largest city. He explained that there are those who are "working towards [the chapter's] destruction" and claimed, "the worst enemies are those from within." He summarized his complaints by stating, "Comparatively speaking, we are not progressing as steadily as many other divisions of the Oriente of Cuba."³² In contrast, later that same month, the Banes Ladies' Division general secretary submitted a report on the progress of Division #52, claiming that local membership was steadily growing and that members were increasingly "understanding more of their race and what is meant by the UNIA." Moreover, she wrote, every member was "anxious to do something to push the cause along," and concluded, "Marcus Garvey can at all times depend upon the Banes division because we have loyal and true men who are ready to undergo any hardship."³³ In contrast to that

28 His Grace, the Right. Hon. Chaplain General, the Rev. Dr. George Alexander M'Guire, Given Great Ovation on his Return from Cuba, *Negro World*, March 19, 1921; AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 2, p. 49. Arnold S. Cumming's name is spelled differently in local UNIA documents, Hill's volume ("Cunning") and in the *Negro World's* article on McGuire's speech ("Cummings"), though we have every reason that they are one and the same; Hill 1983:578–79, fn. 7.

29 His Grace, the Right. Hon. Chaplain General, *Negro World*, March 19, 1921.

30 Appendix IV, Delegates to the 1921 UNIA Convention (Hill 1984:789).

31 See an exchange of letters in which one Mr. Moodie from Santiago fiercely critiques the organization but is quickly reprimanded for his criticism by Robert Blake from Banes. Additionally, Blake was eager to clear the name of another Mr. Moodie residing in Banes from all association with the critical letter writer from Santiago. Oriente, Cuba Goes Wild Over UNIA, *Negro World*, April 28, 1923; All's Well in Banes, *Negro World*, May 26, 1923.

32 Division 194 of Santiago de Cuba, *Negro World*, March 17, 1923.

33 The Future Lies Before Us, Says the Banes Div. No. 52 of Cuba, *Negro World*, March 31, 1923.

of Santiago, the Banes report is upbeat and proud. Bearing in mind that many *Negro World* contributors likely downplayed internal conflicts within their local chapters, the striking contrast in tone may be a matter of distinct writing styles and public relations skills. It is also likely, however, that the UNIA did in fact experience unique success in Banes and other company towns largely thanks to the organization's pragmatic approach to working with major employers of West Indian labor.

Garvey's Movement and the United Fruit Company

By the time the Universal Negro Improvement Association took off in Banes in late 1920 and early 1921, the organization's leadership had already transitioned away from its early, militant period toward reaching a mutual understanding with the United Fruit Company and state powers in the region. When the *Negro World* first began circulating in the Caribbean in 1918, the paper's fiery rhetoric placed Garvey's association in a contentious relationship with British officials and with major employers of West Indian labor. Under the editorial direction of socialist W.A. Domingo, until July 1919, the paper routinely supported black labor solidarity and ran stories predicting race war, such as an article maintaining that the world's "400 million Negroes," suffering "from the injustice of the white man," must "prepare themselves for the next war."³⁴ British colonial authorities claimed the paper had a pernicious influence on British subjects and proposed prohibiting the publication due to its "distinctly inflammatory nature."³⁵ British Honduras, British Guiana, Trinidad, the Windward Islands, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Kitts-Nevis, Antigua, and St. Lucia all moved to suppress the paper, usually by passing ordinances against "seditious" publications. Similarly, a lawyer for the United Fruit Company maintained that the *Negro World* contained "articles tending to stir up trouble in Latin American countries and in the United States by promoting race feeling against the whites." Alluding to deep-seated white fears of black revolt that harked back to the Haitian Revolution, he added, "There is a possibility of [Garvey] attempting to repeat the French experience in Haiti."³⁶

34 Reginald Popham Lobb, Administrator, St. Vincent, to George Basil Haddon-Smith, Governor, Windward Islands, September 2, 1919, in Hill et al. 2011.

35 Viscount Milner, Secretary of State, Colonial Office, to HEW Grant, Officer Administering the Government, Bahamas, September 10, 1919, in Hill et al. 2011:296–97.

36 William Phillips, Assistant Secretary of State, to Abert S. Burlson, US Postmaster General, October 27, 1919, in Hill et al. 2011:405–8.

Though such claims serve more to reveal colonial authority and managerial anxieties than to explain Garvey's actual intentions, a series of riots and labor rebellions did erupt during this postwar period, and many were openly connected with the UNIA. Historian Adam Ewing (2011:123–128) has demonstrated that the language used in strikes and riots in Belize, Trinidad, and the Windward Islands, among other places, closely resembled UNIA literature, and that many uprising leaders exchanged ideas and newspaper articles with the organization's Harlem headquarters. This pattern was not limited to the British Caribbean, as Garveyites reported participating in a successful strike against United Fruit in Puerto Barrios, Guatemala. Moreover, as Carla Burnett (2005) has detailed, a massive 1920 strike in the Panama Canal Zone was led, in part, by local UNIA leaders. Garvey himself sent US\$500 to support the striking workers. In short, in its first iteration, Garvey's organization in the Caribbean was often openly hostile to powerful employers of West Indian labor and his popularity had the potential to pose a significant threat to the imperial, capitalist status quo in many places.

Yet, by 1921, the leadership's approach had shifted significantly. This changed relationship was made apparent early on when United Fruit management discovered that UNIA representatives Henrietta Vinton Davis and Cyril Henry intended to tour the Central American isthmus in late 1919 and early 1920. Upon gathering that the trip was strictly a fund-raising venture principally orchestrated to sell stock in the Black Star Line, company officials concluded that Davis and Henry would rather allow the "goose to lay the golden eggs" than advocate a strike, which would "decrease the purchasing power of the Jamaicans." In the end, United Fruit offered workers cheap rail transportation and gave them the day off so that they could attend UNIA rallies (Harpelle 2003:55–56).³⁷ The company found little conflict between its own business interests and UNIA fundraising efforts.

Garvey's own "retreat from radicalism," to use Hill's words, began in 1921 when economic pressures, including the imminent bankruptcy of the BSL, sent the UNIA president general abroad on a fundraising tour of the Caribbean and Central America. The organization's acute need for financial resuscitation and pressure from the U.S. State Department, which persistently denied Garvey re-entry visas, effectively served to moderate Garvey's tone. Throughout the trip, he repeatedly assured state and company authorities of his noninterfer-

37 The "golden egg" quote, cited in Harpelle 2003, is from GP Chittenden, UFC Manager of the Limón Division, to V.M. Cutter, Vice President of United Fruit, December 21, 1919, and is reproduced in Bourgois 2003:120–21; Hill et al. 2011:476–77.

ence policy, claiming in Cuba, “I do not come here to interfere with the labor question or the political question where governments are concerned,” (Hill 1983a:lxix). During his visit to Limón, Costa Rica, Garvey arranged to postpone his speaking engagement by three days so that two shiploads could be loaded for export. While waiting, he was given access to a special train, typically reserved for white passengers, with which to travel to San José and meet privately with the president of Costa Rica, Julio Acosta (Harpelle 2003). The United Fruit’s manager in Limón later concluded that the UNIA leader’s speeches were “favorable to our business,” because Garvey had told his followers that their work for the company was “their bread and butter” and that “they should not fight the United Fruit Company.”³⁸ The movement’s relationship with the company was such that Garvey himself later traveled on the United Fruit’s Great White Fleet when the BSL failed. On at least one occasion, Eduardo Morales, UNIA high commissioner to Cuba, argued that UNIA had aims and scope similar to those of the United Fruit Company (Guridy 2010:68, 77).

Harpelle (2011:clxxxv) has claimed that this evolving relationship with employers of West Indian labor represents the UNIA’s history of “both radicalism and accommodation,” but pressures appear to have worked the other way as well. United Fruit and powerful employers were often forced to contend with the overwhelming popularity of Garvey and his movement, and were left with no choice but to accommodate the UNIA. For instance, in 1919, Panama Canal authorities went to considerable effort finding a place to dock the Black Star Line’s *S.S. Frederick Douglass*, so that a request for “permission for several thousand of these West Indians to inspect the vessel” could be granted.³⁹ Similarly, United Fruit officials in Panama conceded of Davis and Henry’s visit, “it is useless for us to oppose them,” implicitly acknowledging the widespread popularity the BSL enjoyed in Central America.⁴⁰

In short, by 1921 much of the UNIA leadership’s early labor militancy and fiery rhetoric had tempered, as Garvey and the United Fruit Company reached an understanding of their, at times, mutually beneficial aims. As the wealth of scholarship on Garveyism in various Caribbean port towns and cities demonstrates, changes at the top did not necessarily trickle down to individual chap-

38 G.P. Chittenden to V.M. Cutter, April 22, 1921, reproduced in Bourgois 2003. Harpelle (2003:58–60) even suggests that United Fruit paid Garvey \$2,000 a month during this period.

39 S.W. Heald, Superintendent, Panama Railroad Company, to R.B. Walker, Receiving and Forwarding Agent, Panama Railroad Company, November 14, 1919, in Hill et al. 2011:438.

40 H.S. Blair, Division Manager, United Fruit Company, to George P. Chittenden, December 19, 1919, in Hill, et al. 2011:477–78.

ters. Rather, the organization proved remarkably adaptive to distinctive local circumstances (Burnett 2005; Ewing 2011; Macpherson 2003). Yet, by 1921, when Banes Division #52 was taking off, the realm of ideological approaches to UNIA-led black uplift and community building in the Caribbean had come to include Garvey's policy of noninterference with local labor and political matters. Despite—or perhaps because of—this flexibility, the UNIA thrived throughout the Caribbean in the early 1920s, even as the organization began to disintegrate in the United States. As Ewing (2011:118) argues persuasively, this transition as well as Garveyism's continued success in the Caribbean “reflected the capacity of the movement to effectively speak to the needs and the aspirations of the moment within the realm of political possibility.” In Banes in the early 1920s, the needs of the moment were clear: to build a racial-uplift organization capable of supporting a community whose members continually suffered the profound ramifications of economic turbulence, all the while projecting black respectability in an often hostile society.

Uplift in a Company Town

Garvey and his biographers have argued frequently that his Central American and European peregrinations illuminated the pervasive suffering of his race and pushed Garvey to found the UNIA.⁴¹ What was true of the organization's founder, however, was also true of its rank-and-file membership, as British West Indians dispersed across the Americas were similarly exposed to ubiquitous racial discrimination (Hill 2011:lxv–lxvii; James 1998:50–90; Putnam 2013:16–17). In Central America, the Panama Canal Zone was notorious for the racial segregation of its workforce into “gold” and “silver” employees (Conniff 1985; Greene 2009; Newton 1984). Similarly, the United Fruit Company racially and ethnically segmented its workforces, maintaining distinct health, housing, and recreational facilities at its banana plantations in Central America.⁴² Immigration records for eastern Cuba in the 1920s reveal that a sizable portion of *antillanos* migrated not directly from their home islands, but from other labor destinations, especially Central America.⁴³ By the time West Indians arrived in

41 A. Garvey 1974:34; M. Garvey 1974:73–74; Martin 1976:5–6; Stephens 2005:85–89, 110.

42 Bourgois 1989; Chomsky 1996; Colby 2011; Fowler 1981.

43 Immigration and the Movement of Passengers, ANC, Fondo Donaciones y Remisiones, Leg. 403, Exp. 11. See also Giovannetti 2001:47–50 and Garnes 2009:139. Putnam (2010:282) points out that Jamaican immigration records indicate that the number of Jamaicans arriving home from Cuba exceeded those who departed for Cuba by 6,000, clearly illus-

Banes—also a racially segregated United Fruit town—many had years of first-hand experience with Jim Crow-style segregation.⁴⁴

In this context, Garveyites in Banes, like elsewhere in eastern Cuba, developed an organizational program specifically oriented around black identity. Regulations stated that “[an]y person of the black race or descendent thereof” had the right to be a member of the association, regardless of his or her nationality.⁴⁵ This explicit racial qualification, in and of itself, was a bold policy, given the fact that Cuban law and custom restricted the rights of race-based political and social organizations (de la Fuente 2001:70–71).⁴⁶ The chapter aimed to work toward “fraternity among the [black] race,” and establish black-run primary and secondary schools, hospitals, and commercial establishments.⁴⁷ In fact, other mill towns in eastern Cuba, including Florida and Macareno, were home to UNIA-run schools.⁴⁸

Associational life built in and around race pride and racial uplift was particularly important in the face of not only company-mandated segregation but also openly racist hostility from Cuban society. In the 1920s, Cubans from across the political spectrum increasingly agreed in their opposition to Caribbean immigration. Nationalist intellectuals led by Ramiro Guerra y Sánchez and Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring blamed American “neocolonialism” for “undesirable” black immigration and maintained that the key to ending Cuba’s exploita-

trating Cuba’s status as a subsequent destination for migrants who had set out for Central America as well as their children.

44 For information on racial-segregation in sugar company towns in eastern Cuba, see Casey 2011:8–9; Giovannetti 2001:146, 93; A. James 1976:114–16; McGillivray 2009:104–7, 19–21; Pérez de la Riva 1979:37; Pérez Nakao 2008:36–38.

45 Reglamento de La Asociación Universal Para el Adelanto de la Raza Negra Division No 52 de Banes. AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 2.

46 Giovannetti correctly points out that, in light of legislation against race-based associations, the UNIA omitted the words “Negro” and “African” in its early registration with the Cuban state and reiterated its nonthreatening stance toward the Cuban government. As time went on, however, overt references to black racial uplift crept back into the UNIA rules and regulations of various chapters (Giovannetti 2001:160–61, 2006:9–12). I have seen these documents and they appear to be little more than a nod to local law. For example, in some instances standard UNIA letterhead was used with the words “Negro” and “African” simply crossed out from the formal title of “Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League.”

47 Reglamento de la Asociación Universal para el Adelanto de la Raza Negra, AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 2, p. 12.

48 Selvin E. Reed, Central Macareno Division, Camagüey Cuba, Aug 16, 1933, *Negro World*, October 17, 1933; Con Adj Howlitt, Florida, Cam. Cuba, *Negro World*, September 11, 1926.

tion by foreign power was to prohibit Caribbean immigration while encouraging a “heartier” (white) Spanish immigration (Guerra y Sánchez 1964).⁴⁹ In the 1920s, a common narrative suggested that profits from Cuban sugar benefited only Wall Street and the West Indies, illustrated in newspaper headlines such as “Ten Million Pesos Drawn From Cuba by Jamaicans in Two Years of Work.”⁵⁰ More openly racist rhetoric depicted black immigrants as diseased and illiterate practitioners of witchcraft, as sensationalist headlines such as “Savage Haitian Murders a Boy and Eats His Body” appeared with increasing frequency.⁵¹ Campaigns to prevent the spread of disease supposedly introduced by “unsanitary” immigrants, to quarantine new arrivals to the island, and to raid immigrant housing were common manifestations of the national opposition to black immigration (Giovannetti 2001:39; McLeod 1998:601–2; Pérez de la Riva 1979:46–47, 56–57, 63–65). Spanish-American hostility toward black immigrants laboring for monopolistic foreign companies increased throughout the 1920s and only increased the importance of a vibrant associational life for Afro-Antilleans (Carr 1998:85a; Colby 2011:122; Giovannetti 2006:143).⁵²

In the face of such opposition to black immigration and racist stereotypes about *antillano* immigrants, the UNIA offered a clear avenue to project a strong image of black respectability particularly in Banes’ local British West Indian community. The formal pageantry of parades, dances, and holiday celebrations, as well as of subgroups such as the Black Cross Nurses, was a means through which Garveyites displayed their Christianity and erudition despite negative stereotypes about black immigrants. No one more proudly showcased respectability than the members of Banes Division #52. UNIA rules and regulations in Banes reveal a strong concern with maintaining an organization of the most respected members of “polite society.” For instance, seven or more people could form a division in a place where one did not yet exist, but “these people have to be sufficiently educated and respected in order to command the attention of the other respected and educated members of their community.”⁵³ Robert Blake, in particular, consistently expressed strong concern with

49 For analyses of the implications of these narratives, see Chomsky 2000:38 and de la Fuente 2001:100–4.

50 *El Cubano Libre*, July 9, 1921.

51 See, for example, Several Haitians Caught in the Act of Grotesque Witchcraft Practices, *Diario de Cuba*, May 5, 1927; Savage Haitian Murders a Boy and Eats His Body, *El Cubano Libre*, October 20, 1921.

52 For an excellent summary of the exclusionary laws enacted across the region, see Putnam 2013:95–110.

53 Reglamento No 52 de Banes, AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 2.

the reception of UNIA activities and what he called the “estimation of the public.”⁵⁴ In 1923, he described the division’s monthly parade and drew upon a thick vocabulary of respectability. After noting that “any stranger coming to Banes ... would see something to be remembered,” indicating a clear concern with the *reception* of UNIA performance, he detailed each of the “uniformed units, looking clean and orderly,” and congratulated several other chapters for the “prominent men who are identifying themselves with the cause.”⁵⁵

A Banes UNIA Mother’s Day celebration held in 1923 epitomized Garveyite pronouncement of respectability. Attended by “the most influential elements” of Banes’s society, the event entailed hymns, a scripture lesson, and forty-seven separate performances delivered by mothers and children. The dedicated—and apparently inexhaustible—UNIA members gathered again later that evening at Liberty Hall for their regular Sunday-night mass meeting, where officers, dressed “in full regalia,” processed to the stage and addressed the audience on the subjects of “the love of mothers” and their “duties toward their little ones.” In particular, one R.G. Murray advised mothers to “educate your boys and girls and fit them for their future career so that they may be able when we are gone to marshal the cause to a glorious end.”⁵⁶ By honoring the responsibility UNIA women had as mothers, Garveyites in Cuba continued a long tradition of gendered racial uplift that viewed women’s roles as principally domestic: raising children and acting as helpmate to their husbands.⁵⁷

In practice, however, women in Cuba did much more than educate their children in the UNIA cause. While the Harlem leadership structure only gave those women positioned as Garvey’s personal representatives prominent roles in the association, Garveyite women in the Caribbean were integrated into the main division leadership, often functioning as reporter or executive secretary, and not simply “ladies’ secretary.” Women served as chairpersons at mass

54 Blake, Banes Division, UNIA & ACL, *Negro World*, March 26, 1921, p. 9.

55 Blake, A Ringing Message from Banes, *Negro World*, April 14, 1923.

56 U.N.I.A. in Cuba Celebrates Mother’s Day, *Negro World*, April 14, 1923; R.G. Murray, Big Day at Banes, Oriente, Cuba, *Negro World*, March 24, 1923.

57 In an excellent analysis of gender in the Garvey movement, Barbara Bair notes that Victorian gender roles of the black racial-uplift movement appealed to black men and women reacting against a long history of racist gender ascription, giving typically “feminine qualities” (such as subordination and passivity) to black men and “masculine qualities” (such as physicality and strength) to black women. She contends that the concept of separate spheres for black women and men “was a reversal of the double standard applied by whites in which white women belonged in the home, black women in the workforce” (Bair 1990:156).

meetings, as sports-program organizers, and as reporters to the *Negro World*. In the early 1920s, Banes Division #52's reporter and secretary were women.⁵⁸ Women were particularly important to the UNIA in mill towns, as men left the area for long periods of time after the sugar harvests. In other words, public projections of women as helpmates reveal more about the particular goals of the association—to cultivate an image of respectability—than about the actual roles of female UNIA members and organizers in the Caribbean.

In addition to drawing upon the UNIA's race-pride philosophy in order to project black respectability, *antillanos* in Banes built in the organization a means of maintaining West Indian community stability, despite a tremendous amount of economic turbulence. The lives of sugar workers and those dependent on the sugar economy in Cuba were marked with the persistent economic instability that accompanies single-crop economies. Even in good times, when the price of sugar was high and markets steady, agricultural workers experienced seasonal unemployment after each sugar harvest. Further, periodic economic crises had devastating effects on local sugar towns, with immigrant workers suffering the most. The 1920 postwar collapse in sugar prices and Cuba's subsequent banking crash caused an abrupt halt in production, sent many immigrant workers home, and left others stranded and in dire circumstances.⁵⁹ In this difficult time the UNIA provided material assistance by distributing food to distressed immigrants in Santiago de Cuba awaiting passage home.⁶⁰ After the UNIA stepped in to assist those in need, several new chapters opened in eastern Cuba, suggesting that such assistance boosted the organization's reputation.⁶¹ During the second half of the decade, diminished employ-

58 For the North American leadership structure, see Bair 1990:155. For examples of an integrated leadership structure, see Ingenia, Rio Canto, *Negro World*, September 5, 1925; Santiago, Cuba, *Negro World*, May 19, 1925; R.H. Bachelor, Garvey Relieve Cantata is Staged by Division #164, at Guantánamo, *Negro World*, September 8, 1923; Dora Stennett, Elia, Cam. Cuba, *Negro World*, August 21, 1926; Mrs. E. Chandler, Children's Evening Celebrated at Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, *Negro World*, March 31, 1923.

59 United States National Archives, College Park MD. Microfilm RG 165; War Department. General and Special Staffs; M1507 Correspondences & Record Cards of the MI Div. Relating to General Political, Economic, Military Conditions in Cuba and the West Indies, 1918–1941, Reel 5, Economic Reports docs. 2655-Q-27, Q-28, Q-30, and Q-47; Report of Conditions Existing in the Cuban Republic, *Negro World*, August 27, 1921.

60 Report, British Consulate, Santiago de Cuba, November 17th, 1921, submitted to the Colonial Secretary, Kingston, ANC, Fondo Secretaria de Estado, Leg. 532, Exp. 12473; McLeod 1996:140–41.

61 In 1922, the UNIA established branches in Guantánamo and the eastern sugar towns of Jobabo, Antilla, and Central Manatí. See AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 2, Exp. 3, Exp. 4,

ment possibilities for immigrant workers in Cuba made the UNIA's resources as a mutual-aid society all the more valuable, which may explain how chapters in Cuba often outlasted the movement's decline in North America.

Garveyites frequently asserted with pride the strength of the community they built through the UNIA. Parades continued, mass meetings were held, and members struggled against the odds to "put the program over." In 1923, Division #52 president Blake boasted that he and his fellow UNIA members maintained a position of "no surrender" in the face of hardship and that Division #52 held an elaborate parade every month, even though "many of our male members have left this locality in search of employment."⁶² In an often-repeated narrative of persevering despite difficulties, Garveyites praised the association for surmounting the many obstacles of life in Cuba, of overcoming "bitter struggle" with "dogged determination."⁶³ In other words, through the Universal Negro Improvement Association, British West Indians strived to assert a degree of community stability despite the ongoing movement—including seasonal migration, longer-term immigration, and returns home—that marked immigrant life in Cuba's company towns.

This organizational infrastructure and community stability proved useful not only to West Indians, but also to their employers. Although power discrepancies between migrant laborers and employers, especially United Fruit, were tremendous and although workers routinely faced a grueling harvest followed by unemployment and destitution, sugar factory and field workers did exert a degree of agency over the particulars of their migratory experience. Historians Barry Carr and Matthew Casey have both demonstrated that workers regularly voted with their feet, protesting poor working conditions by simply leaving the worst sugar estates (Carr 1998b; Casey 2011). Indeed, records suggest that sugar companies competed intensely for laborers during the harvest season, as workers routinely chose labor destinations based on word of mouth.⁶⁴ As

and Exp. 7; and Leg. 2497, Exp. 7.

62 Blake, A Ringing Message from Banes, *Negro World*, April 14, 1923.

63 Jones, The UNIA in Camagüey, Cuba, Surmounts Difficulties, *Negro World*, May 26, 1923. See also Sydney F. Hugh Miller, Memorial Day for Banner Division, 323, *Negro World*, April 28, 1923.

64 For examples of the intense competition between sugar companies for laborers, see Cuban American Sugar Company (CASC) reports that complained that United Fruit was encroaching on its "special reserve" of labor recruiting (CASC General Manager Wood to Walter S. Bartlett, November 15, 1928, Archivo Histórico Provincial Las Tunas, CASC: Signatura 0444/43, p. 201). See also a series of complaints in which labor recruiters poached workers from one another by loitering at competitor train depots and decrying local

Lara Putnam (2002:11) has pointed out to her fellow historians, social ties shape migration. These “social ties” could include, of course, institutional networks created through the UNIA. In this sense, community stability built through the UNIA dovetailed with companies’ needs for workers, as some West Indians found in the UNIA a useful proxy for direct familiar or friendship ties to a new location. For instance, in 1921, Irene Richards told a Garveyite audience in the sugar town of Marcane, Cuba, that when she first arrived on the island she had inquired as to where the nearest UNIA chapter was located because she would not live in a town without an active division.⁶⁵ As an organization that offered a degree of social capital to new migrants and sped the process by which arrivals were settled into their new homes, the UNIA performed a key role in stabilizing the labor force for companies that, like United Fruit, desperately needed workers during the harvest but were unwilling to provide laborers with housing, let alone employment, during the off-season.

Just as it had learned in Central America that Black Star Line fundraising efforts posed no threat to company interests (indeed, workers’ need for cash with which to buy shares seemed to *reduce* the likelihood of a strike), United Fruit and other sugar employers in Cuba found that the UNIA performed an important role in sustaining their workforces. During the era of what Gillian McGillivray (2009:90–141) has called the “patrons’ compact,” in the late 1910s and 1920s, sugar companies systematically underpaid employees, requiring workers to rely on private acts of charity (or seemingly magnanimous patronage from mill owners and managers) to help them through times of individual or collective economic distress. In this context, tolerance of (if not outright support for) the Universal Negro Improvement Association helped sugar companies minimize their own role in reproducing the labor force.⁶⁶ As a mutual-aid society, Division #52 and other UNIA chapters offered illness-and-death benefits, supported the unemployed, and distributed food and clothing during economic downturns and natural disasters, all crucial elements of a safety net that the company declined to provide.

Indeed, the Garveyite uplift project in Banes was decidedly nonthreatening to business interests, as racial uplift was largely understood in entrepreneurial terms. The group had plans to establish a Juvenile Dime Savings Bank, for

working conditions (Alma Sugar Company to Hon Sr. Guillermo F. Mascaro, Gobernador de Oriente, March 5, 1919, AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 307, Exp. 21).

65 UNIA Marcane, Oriente, Cuba on the Upward March, *Negro World*, March 19, 1921.

66 For a brief but excellent take on the tendency of multinational corporations operating in Latin America to continually reduce their own rule in reproducing their workforces, see Chomsky 2011.

instance, which was intended to “encourage the spirit of saving among our children.”⁶⁷ Some of its most prominent members, such as bookseller Arnold Cummings, who attended the UNIA conventions in New York, were businessmen in their own right, and in the early 1920s no Division #52 officers were seasonal laborers. As domestic servants, many leading female Garveyites likely found mechanisms by which to make the patronage system work for their own entrepreneurial ends by establishing small side businesses.⁶⁸ Elsewhere in eastern Cuba, UNIA leaders thanked local business leaders and company officials for supporting the association.⁶⁹ Given this entrepreneurial spirit and nonconfrontational approach to major employers, it is unsurprising that local UNIA officers were able to secure from United Fruit a special railcar to transport Garvey from the train depot at Dumois to Banes during his brief visit to town.

This seems to support Marc McLeod’s contention that the Universal Negro Improvement Association in Cuba largely functioned as an “immigrant protection association” (McLeod 1996:157–58). McLeod and others later revised this position, taking into consideration overwhelming evidence that Afro-Cubans did in fact participate in the organization, especially in larger Cuban cities (Guridy 2003; McLeod 2003). Nevertheless, the “immigrant protection” and mutual-aid program of the UNIA seems to have been the order of the day in company towns. Indeed, in contrast to the *oriental* capital of Santiago de Cuba, which had a Spanish-speaking UNIA branch by the late 1920s, Banes has left no record of significant Afro-Cuban UNIA membership.⁷⁰ Moreover, the

67 Asoc. Univ. para el Adelanto de la raza negra to Provincial Governor, July 28, 1924, AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 2; All’s Well in Banes, Cuba, *Negro World*, May 26, 1923; Reglamento de La Asociacion Universal Para el Adelanto de la Raza Negro, AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 2.

68 AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 2, p. 49. Although his memoir of a North American’s childhood in Banes must be treated with a degree of skepticism, Jack Skelly (2006) mentions that employer paternalism occasionally supplied domestic workers with an old vehicle, a supply of food, or cash, all of which could in turn be used to start small businesses, support a family, or save toward returning home.

69 For instance, during their extensive campaign organizing new UNIA chapters in the mill towns of eastern Cuba, Samuel P. Radway and Dave Davidson frequently implored local businessmen to support the organization. In Jobabo, they secured the use of a local Cuban-owned hotel for their meeting, borrowed an organ from another local institution, and made a point of thanking the “honorable gentleman, Mr. J.R. Bullard, General Manager of the Jobabo Sugar Company, who is a friend of the Negro,” (E.H. Hope Williams, *The UNIA Almost Encircles Island of Cuba*, *Negro World*, March 26, 1921, p. 8).

70 UARN Capítulo Cubano 7i, División del Habla Española, Santiago de Cuba, March 17, 1927,

entrepreneurial spirit of uplift in Banes differed significantly from the UNIA program in the central Cuban town of Sagua la Grande, where Frank Guridy (2010:96–97) found widespread Cuban participation in the movement. There, UNIA members criticized employers, such as the local railroad company and police force, for not hiring black people in important positions.⁷¹ Similarly, in Camagüey, Garveyites subtly protested the informal segregation of a local park by holding a massive rally in the section of the park typically used by whites.

The unique trajectories of various Garveyite branches are most clearly revealed in the late 1920s, when Cuban president Gerardo Machado, alarmed by the threat increasing Afro-Cuban UNIA participation posed to his reputation as a black-friendly leader who had fostered racial harmony in Cuba, began suppressing the organization. His administration closed several chapters, including the Sagua la Grande division, and outlawed the *Negro World* (Guridy 2003:124–31). Yet, during this crackdown, Banes Division #52 stayed open, unmolested by the Cuban state, as did several others mill town chapters. In fact, the Banes branch of the UNIA lasted for decades, only closing in 1960, a year after the Cuban Revolution. In a town where most land was owned by the company and where even state officials often served at the behest of the company, it is unlikely that the UNIA could have stayed open without a degree of support and, perhaps, protection from the United Fruit Company.

Although Division #52 remained active for decades, by the end of the 1920s the association's leadership and composition shifted. A sizable portion of the UNIA officer corps transferred their energies to the Jamaica Club, founded in 1927, and a number of leaders went on to serve long tenures as officers in the new club.⁷² Division #52 executive secretary James Lake, for instance, and UNIA trustee Josia Frances participated in both groups.⁷³ While some in Banes

AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 9, p. 3.

- 71 Carlos del Castillo to Coronol Emiliano Amiell Ginori, M.M, August 15, 1929, AHPVC, Asoc., Leg. 77, Exp. 563, pp. 70–71. Special thanks to Frank Guridy for pointing me to this rich source of material on the UNIA.
- 72 Isaac S. Hall to Provincial Governor of Oriente, April 7, 1927, AHPSC Fondo-GP, Leg. 2697, Exp. 4 p. 2; UNIA in Banes, Cuba Forging Ahead, *Negro World*, February 26, 1921, p. 10.
- 73 Others probably made similar transitions. For instance, two young women with the surname Hall performed at the ceremonies held in honor of Marcus Garvey's visit. It is possible that these young women were the daughters of Isaac S. Hall, founding secretary of the Jamaica Club. See Isaac S. Hall to Provincial Governor of Oriente, April 7, 1927, AHPSC, GP, Leg. 2697, Exp. 4; Banes Division Welcomes Hon. Marcus Garvey, *Negro World*, April 30, 1921.

shifted their energies toward new clubs, others returned to the British West Indies by the end of the decade, but did not abandon their affiliation with the UNIA. After moving to Jamaica, Arnold S. Cummings served as UNIA division president in Harmony and, later, St. Andrew (Post 1978:417). The professional composition of Division #52's leadership changed as well. By 1930, day laborers served as trustees and by 1933, field laborers (whose occupation is listed simply as "*campo*" or "field") held leading positions, such as secretary, in an officer corps no longer dominated by the skilled and semiskilled.⁷⁴ The UNIA division also saw its numbers significantly reduced. This seems to have been a pattern across the island by the end of the decade and is most likely the result of the repatriation of many immigrant laborers after the economic collapse of 1929.

There are several possible explanations as to why skilled and semiskilled UNIA officers moved to the Jamaica Club and why field laborers moved up into prominent positions within the UNIA. One possibility is that those in more specialized professions had resources to leave the island and return home during the late-1920s economic crisis, and this may have been the case for some, although many UNIA officers from the early and mid-1920s remained in town and became active in the Jamaica Club. Another possibility is that personal differences divided the branch, not an uncommon phenomenon in the 1920s. Elsewhere in the Caribbean, scholars have used local newspapers to demonstrate that disputes and rivalries often caused significant tensions within various UNIA branches, internal divisions that are likely masked in reports to the *Negro World*.⁷⁵ That skilled workers gravitated to the Jamaica Club while factory and field workers moved into UNIA leadership, however, suggests a growing rift specifically along class lines. This latter possibility resonates with trends found elsewhere in the greater Caribbean. Putnam points out that, in 1930, British West Indian elites in Limón lamented that the local UNIA chapter had transitioned from the "classes" to the "masses of the Negro race" (Putnam 2013:249). While we must be careful not to anachronistically apply distinctions between class and race politics to a people for whom class exploitation and racial discrimination were tightly woven, it is clear that by the end of the 1920s UNIA Division #52 was no longer led by the relative elites within local British

74 Lista de la Directiva, Asoc. Univ. Para el Adelanto de la Raza Negra, November 1930, AHPSC, GP, Leg. 2452, Exp. 2 p. 67.

75 This is also true of other Cuban branches: by the late 1920s, for instance, the Havana UNIA chapter was rife with internal divisions over matters such as leadership positions. See Exchange of letters, beginning with Nestmore Chance to the Gobernador de la Prov. de la Habana, June 25, 1928, ANC, Asoc., Leg. 306, Exp. 8892.

West Indian society who had avoided confrontations with the company by focusing their energies on community stability and projections of respectability.

Conclusions

Throughout the Caribbean during its boom years in the early 1920s, the UNIA proved remarkably adaptable, catering to local circumstances and political realities while continually advancing the larger goals of black pride and uplift. Jacob Zumoff (2013:433–44) has demonstrated that the Garvey movement in Panama initially overlapped considerably with labor radicalism, but in the aftermath of the failed 1920 strike, the UNIA distanced itself from organized labor. Whereas the defeated West Indians would wait over a decade before again joining a labor union, they joined and grew the UNIA, which flourished in the zone throughout the 1920s. After the strike in Panama, many West Indians moved on to Cuba, where lessons learned on the isthmus could easily be applied to sugar company towns: better to struggle for racial uplift, to showcase black respectability, and to maintain a degree of community stability than to fight the company and be forced to abandon the beloved association altogether.

Banes #52 “forged ahead” throughout the 1920s precisely because it met the immediate needs of its members living and laboring in a world of U.S. hegemony, rising hostility toward black immigrants, and tremendous economic turbulence. The UNIA offered material support to migrants in need and for whom the company offered no relief, posed racial solutions to the problem of pervasive racial discrimination, and fostered community unity and stability, all without antagonizing company and state authorities. In a sense, the UNIA and the United Fruit Company were each aware that they had mutually beneficial goals. It is in this context that Garveyites in Banes managed to build one of the most successful branches of the association worldwide, all the while appealing to, and forging, a strong sense of race pride. The everyday work that British West Indians put into building, growing, and sustaining the UNIA helped cohere black solidarity, and their efforts remind us that, in addition to the more familiar roles played by leading activists and intellectuals, nonelite women and men were often the ones who put diaspora into action during the interwar years—a high point in the history of global pan-Africanism.⁷⁶

76 This is also a crucial point made by Putnam 2013.

In 1929, Afro-Cuban labor leader Sandalio Junco argued at an international congress of labor leaders that communist parties across Latin America had a special obligation to appeal to race consciousness in their attempts to recruit black workers, particularly those *antillanos* laboring for foreign-owned companies like *el pulpo*. Garveyism, he claimed, had “diverted” black workers from the path of anti-imperialism and anticapitalism. Couched in Junco’s criticism was an implicit acknowledgment that the Garvey movement had in fact enjoyed tremendous popularity in Latin America, and that the global left had something to learn from Garvey’s race-based appeal (Junco 1929:165). Cuba’s left would take several years to heed Junco’s advice and organize immigrant workers, beginning only in 1932, when economic pressures began to combine with Cuban nationalism to the point of revolution. During Cuba’s revolution of 1933, a united block of some 6,000 Jamaican, Haitian, Chinese, and Cuban workers from the United Fruit Company’s territory near the Banes and Nipe bays participated in a nationwide sugar insurgency, taking over the company’s mill and infrastructural facilities, and paralyzing production for over six days.⁷⁷ By then, the realm of possibilities Garveyites had so astutely assessed in the 1920s had changed; the patrons’ compact was over and labor militancy posed new possibilities. Junco’s message took root, as black liberation and world communism increasingly became intertwined projects in the 1930s.⁷⁸ This work however, rested on the foundation West Indian Garveyites laid in the previous decade and a half.

77 Granda, Delegado del Buró Nacional Del Sindicato Nacional de Obreros de la Industria Azucarera, Conferencia Provincial de Oriente de Obreros de la Industria Azucarera, September 18, 1933, Instituto de Historia de Cuba, Fondo 1: Signatura 1/8:87/15.1/1–10; CNOC, SNOIA La zafra actual y las tareas de los obreros azucareros, January 1934, IHC Fondo 1: Signatura 1/8:87/1.1/2–11. For an excellent history of the sugar insurgency, see Carr 1996.

78 For just a few examples of excellent scholarship which cover black radicalism in the 1930s, see Adi 2009 and Makalani 2011.

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Black Pete, “Smug Ignorance,” and the Value of the Black Body in Postcolonial Netherlands*

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Abstract

This article discusses the controversies over the blackface figure Black Pete (Zwarte Piet)—central to the popular Dutch Saint Nicholas holiday tradition—and the public uproar surrounding the Saint Nicholas feast in 2013. It combines history, social theory, and patchwork ethnography, and draws on theoretical approaches discussing race, capitalism, and the commodification of cultural difference to establish an understanding of the controversial character. In doing so, it argues that Black Pete is an invented tradition that marks a “white Dutch habitus” in which the historical context of colonialism and the legacy of slavery is repeatedly ignored or denied.

Keywords

colonial history – consumption – Netherlands – postcolonialism – racism

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Please note that the Black Pete “tradition” continues to preoccupy both its advocates and opponents in Dutch society. We have finished our analysis of the various debates, and protests for and against the “tradition” in late May 2014.

The Dutch Saint Nicholas (*Sinterklaas*) celebration, a folkloric festivity commemorating Saint Nicholas, is a popular annual holiday event celebrated from mid-November to December 5. In mid-November, broadcast live on national television, Saint Nicholas triumphantly arrives in a selected city of the Netherlands, accompanied by numerous men and women dressed in costume as Black Pete (*Zwarte Piet*). They are eagerly greeted by thousands of Dutch people, children and adults alike, who have waited impatiently several weeks for their arrival. After the official welcoming event, most Dutch cities and towns hold their own arrival parade (*intocht*). In this tradition, many Black Petes follow Saint Nicholas, assisting the saintly character on his travels throughout the Netherlands until early December. Together they meet with many Dutch families presenting gifts to only the children who have been good. During this time, homes, businesses and streets of the Netherlands are festooned with Saint Nicholas and Black Pete decorations, and sweets and other typical Saint Nicholas products and gifts are sold in stores throughout the country.

Historically (270–343), Saint Nicholas was the bishop of Myra (a town in present-day Turkey). He is also known as "Nikolaos the Wonderworker" due to several miracles attributed to his intercession. Saint Nicholas had a reputation for secret gift giving and was declared a saint by the Catholic Church, becoming the patron saint of many groups, including that of children (Blakely 1993:40). As such, Saint Nicholas became a model for the Dutch *Sinterklaas* and is still revered today as an admirable gift-giver. Nowadays in the Netherlands, usually a white Dutch person plays Saint Nicholas and white Dutch people in blackface makeup play Black Pete. Saint Nicholas' Eve (December 5), known as "*Sinterklaasavond*" or "*pakjesavond*," is the chief time for giving presents.

The Dutch multicultural capital, Amsterdam, where Saint Nicholas is patron saint of the city, also holds its annual parade to welcome Saint Nicholas. Currently more than six hundred Black Petes, male and female, convoy the saint on his arrival to this city—a huge event.¹ The quintessential Dutch row homes serve as the backdrop in the city center, while hundreds of thousands onlookers cheer in excitement as a steamboat proceeds along the water with Saint Nicholas and dozens of Black Petes. The Saint, an elderly, solemn man with long, white hair and a long, white, full beard, stands ceremoniously at the head of the boat. He is dressed in a rich red robe, wearing a bishop's miter and holding a decorated, ceremonial shepherd's staff with a curled top. The blackface

1 The website <http://www.sintinamsterdam.nl> (Saint in Amsterdam) proudly reports the more than 600 Black Petes that will be present (last visited May 3, 2014).

Petes wave and dance for the crowds usually wearing Afro wigs and gold earrings, and they often have their lips painted bright red. They are dressed up like seventeenth-century pages in a costume of a feathered cap, lace collar, velour jacket, colorful knickers and tights. After the boat docks, the mayor of Amsterdam greets Saint Nicholas, later allowing him to address the public. Following the mayor's welcoming, the Black Petes dance, play music, hand out sweets, walk on stilts, rollerblade, and perform acrobatic tricks between the crowds that line a main street of Amsterdam for the parade. Meanwhile, Saint Nicholas proceeds on his white, faithful horse, "Amerigo," waving to the crowds. In this fashion, together with several Black Petes he is then ready to cross the Netherlands

This holiday tradition, displaying a seemingly white master/black servant relationship, brings about discussions on race and the legacy of slavery in the Netherlands, and urges reflection on a couple of important questions: What are the possible links between Black Pete and the Dutch legacy of slavery? What does his existence in a postcolonial, supposedly multicultural society indicate about present-day Dutch racism? How does the consumption of Black Pete products relate to historical and contemporary commodification of the black body? And, finally, how are these questions connected and related to one another? This article explores these questions for a more thorough understanding of the blackface character—central to one of the most popular Dutch festivities—its stereotypical representations, contested racial components, and the (lack of) value assigned to blackness and black bodies in the Netherlands.

Yet, to grasp the both widely embraced *and* contested Black Pete character, it is first important to scrutinize recent controversies over the playful, festival character and the public uproar surrounding the Saint Nicholas' celebration in 2013. The protests against, and as a reaction to the Black Pete tradition around that year's festivities, turned into grim, even violent manifestations of identity politics and recognition. For the first time several public figures, politicians, celebrities, and influential scholars were taking a stance against the traditional celebration. On the wave of these events, international attention for the Dutch holiday tradition increased remarkably and, consequently, some minor though symbolically significant changes have been made.² Hence, these developments may mark a turning point in the ongoing debate, slowly transforming persistent

2 The organization of the Saint Nicholas feast in Amsterdam, for example, decided in liaison with the mayor of the city and several appellants to ban Black Pete's golden earrings in the 2013 festivities.

interpretations and practices. At the same time, however, current statements of both controversial and mainstream politicians, and public outrage also show the reiteration of a "willful" or "smug ignorance" (Smith 2014; Essed & Hoving 2014b) regarding race issues in the popular celebration, as well as a massive defense against discussing it and fierce refusal to find compromise. In these cases, the claim continues to be that "Black Pete is merely a fun character, completely unrelated to messy politics, and he is part of an innocent tradition, aimed at children whose innocent pleasure would be free from racism or any form of politics by definition" (Essed & Hoving 2014b:21–22; see Brienen 2014; Smith 2014). This article concentrates on these recent developments, whereupon it discusses the deeper historical context and related controversies over representations of Black Pete. In doing so, it aims to analyze established, interlocking systems of domination and hegemonic notions, and illuminates the ways the black body is literally brought into play as a sentimental, commodified resource and/or locus of entertainment.

"Black Pete is Black and I Cannot Change that ..."

In a press conference preceding the international Nuclear Security Summit in March 2014, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte astounded friend and foe when confronted with a critical question by Dutch-American journalist Kevin Roberson about the racist character of Black Pete. Rutte replied: "Black Pete is black and I cannot change that ... because the name is Black Pete." After Roberson pointed out that the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights had classified (on October 22, 2013) Black Pete as a racist part of the annual Saint Nicholas feast, as the character confirms negative black stereotypes, Rutte persisted by stating:

I simply do not agree. This is an old children's tradition (Sinterklaas and Zwarte Piet). It is not "Green Pete" or "Brown Pete," it is "Black Pete," so I cannot change that. This is an old tradition, and I can only say that my friends in the Dutch Antilles, well they are very happy when they have Sinterklaas because they don't have to paint their faces, and when I'm playing Black Pete, for days I'm trying to get off ... the stuff [greasepaint] on my face.³

3 See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6ahnNZvW5k> (last visited May 3, 2014).

Rutte's remarks caused an avalanche of shocked, upset tweets and comments on Facebook and other social media. Artist and activist Quinsy Gario, known as one of the initiators of *Zwarte Piet Is Racisme* (*Black Pete Is Racism*)⁴ and several Black Pete protests, responded on Facebook: "Thank you very much, Mark Rutte. The racism behind Black Pete could not have been translated better."⁵ Amsterdam alderman Andr  e van Es, who was involved in the organization of the 2013 commemoration of the one hundred-fiftieth anniversary of the abolition of slavery in Suriname and the Dutch Caribbean, voiced similar criticism: "Seen Rutte? If this isn't a solid argument to say farewell to Black Pete, then I don't know anymore. Prime Minister of all Dutch people?"⁶ On behalf of Overlegorgaan Caribische Nederlanders (OCaN, Consultative Council for Dutch Caribbean People in the Netherlands), chairman Glenn Helberg, stated:

The Prime Minister of the Netherlands displays ignorance as to the origin of Black Pete in the Kingdom. It is our conviction that he shows no intention of assuming responsibility for the shared slavery past in the Kingdom and the manner in which blacks are being treated ... Rutte may be able to remove this make up, but he cannot discard his colonial mind-set.⁷

A variety of people termed Rutte's statements as arrogant, lacking subtlety and embarrassingly ignorant, particularly for a Prime Minister who studied history. Moreover, the Prime Minister's performance was highly peculiar against the background of the latest developments that took root in a tense past of protest and criticism, on the one hand, and denial and hostile countercritique, on the other hand, both nationally and internationally.

Over the last few decades various attempts have been made to move away from blackfaced performances and negative stereotypes by introducing, for example, red-, yellow-, blue- and green-faced Petes or multicolored "rainbow Petes." However, time and again, these initiatives were simply choked off by

4 <http://zwartepietisracisme.tumblr.com> (last visited May 3, 2014).

5 https://thedailyherald.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46779:rutte-criticised-for-black-pete-remark&catid=1:islands-news&Itemid=54 (last visited May 3, 2014).

6 https://thedailyherald.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46779:rutte-criticised-for-black-pete-remark&catid=1:islands-news&Itemid=54 (last visited May 3, 2014).

7 <http://www.ocan.nl/OCaN-Nieuws/divide-and-rule-behind-ruttes-makeup.html> (last visited May 3, 2014).

common assertions, such as Black Pete is an "innocent, old tradition" and part of "our culture." Refusing to admit any kind of racial component, these statements were and still are, as Rutte showed, delivered as "unassailable facts meant to end any discussion" (Smith 2014:222). Recently, advocates of Black Pete defend the tradition more and more by making a direct link between the popular tradition, a national sense of pride and Dutch identity (and the fear of losing them), the latter being fuelled by reactionary, controversial politicians like the former minister of Vreemdelingenzaken en Integratie (Immigration and Integration) Rita Verdonk. In her 2008 manifesto that marked the installation of her new political party, *Trots op Nederland* (Proud of the Netherlands), Verdonk invoked a widely sensed threat to the beloved tradition suggesting an attack on Dutch native culture and "our traditions."⁸

Such insinuations are increasingly part of populist discourses of conservative politicians like Rita Verdonk or Geert Wilders, the leader of the *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (Party for Freedom), who in the 2013 turmoil (see below) tweeted that he would rather eliminate the UN than Black Pete. Yet, more mainstream politicians, like Mark Rutte, are also inclined to adopt similar, sometimes racist discourses, rather than to counter them (Essed & Hoving 2014b:11 ff.; Smith 2014:231–235). Under these conditions, criticism of and protests against the tradition grew tense, in particular against Saint Nicholas' helper, Black Pete. The playful, though confrontational art exhibition, *Read the Masks: Tradition is not Given*, held at the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven in 2008, fired the starting signal for a deluge of rude, often hateful and even violent responses. The international artists, Annette Krauss and Petra Bauer, received death threats for taking the next, more public step in their critical exhibit. Ultimately, the succeeding phases of their three-part artistic project never materialized (see Smith 2014:229 ff.).⁹ The grassroot outrage was not an isolated incident; subsequent acts and protests received similar negative, sometimes extreme reactions. On November 12, 2011, four people, including Quinsy Gario, wearing t-shirts with the text "Zwarte Piet is racism" ("Black Pete is racism") were forcibly arrested

8 See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBJADVakoJY> (last visited May 3, 2014); see Smith (2014:231–232).

9 The exhibition was part of a broader artistic project devoted to the project *Be(com)ing Dutch* at the Van Abbemuseum. Besides the exhibition, a second act would consist of a planned, filmed, mock-protest march. The final project, then, would be a film including preceding work and stages, the public reaction to this as well as the artists' further explorations of the Saint Nicholas tradition. See <http://www.becomingdutch.com/introduction/> and <http://vimeo.com/53495267> (last visited May 3, 2014).

for protesting against the arrival parade in the city of Dordrecht. The next day, five more protesters suffered the same fate during the Amsterdam parade.¹⁰ Describing these events, Joy Smith, English professor at Hunter College in New York City, (2014:231) argues that:

The activists may have brought more attention to this issue, but given the negative reaction to the protesters by the general public, critical reflection on the meaning of the black-face performance has not improved since the Van Abbe Museum debacle of 2008.

Smith could not foresee the oncoming developments. In October 2013 the debate exploded, polarizing both cultural and political life, and dragging in opinion leaders, politicians, celebrities and other prominent public figures such as Eberhard van der Laan, the mayor of Amsterdam, and influential scholars like Abram de Swaan.¹¹ Above all, this time the controversy received growing international attention. Complaints from individuals and civil society organizations reached the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human Rights. On November 21, 2013, UN human rights experts advised the Dutch government to facilitate the growing national debate on whether or not the portrayal of Black Pete perpetuates both a negative stereotype and derogatory image of Africans and people of African descent. Like the artists of the Van Abbemuseum exhibition, the UN human rights experts received death threats and, after publishing their findings, the advice was ignored by the Dutch government.¹² Nonetheless, it did result in a national debate, in which diverging opinions were fiercely ventilated in newspapers and magazines, TV talk shows,

10 See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZjU-tova_w and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9WqSS_O1MkM (last visited May 3, 2014).

11 See Abram de Swaan's article "Erken Het: Hier Wonen Ook Donkere Mensen" ("Admit It: Black People Live Here Too") in *NRC Handelsblad*, October 22, 2013. Artist and activist Quinsy Gario, who was arrested in the 2011 Dordrecht parade, ignited hot debate when he appeared in the popular television talk show Pauw & Witteman on October 7, 2013, to make his case again. See <https://pauwenwitteman.vara.nl/media/301522> (last visited May 3, 2014).

12 See <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14013&LangID=E> for both the statement by the UN experts and the Dutch government's reply (last visited May 3, 2014). The government's denial was partly motivated by statements made by UN expert Verene Sheperd. In an interview she voiced her personal opinion stating that Black Pete is racist and a throwback to slavery. Sheperd signed the final report that the UN submitted to the Dutch government, but later it was found that she was not authorized to sign it.

and discussions on social media. It triggered passionate feelings, as well as aggressive actions and reactions; numerous white Dutch people reacted furiously to accusations that the tradition is racist. Many repeated the "it is our culture" statement or the long-standing claim that Black Pete appears black because of the soot from the chimneys he climbs to deliver presents. A petition page on Facebook backing Black Pete, named "Pietitie," gathered over two million likes within just a few days. The country's largest newspaper, *De Telegraaf*, portrayed anti-Black Pete protesters as troublemakers, while popular celebrities (both black and white), like sports newscaster Humberto Tan, singer Anouk, and model Doutzen Kroes, opposing the Black Pete custom, received insults and death threats. A pro-Black Pete protest at the Malieveld in The Hague turned grim and aggressive when a dark-skinned woman, who was addressing a totally different political issue, was besieged by an angry mob and needed rescuing by the police.¹³ In the midst of these events, Prime Minister, Mark Rutte, simply commented, "Black Pete is black," the same trivializing remark he would repeat during the international press conference prior to the Nuclear Security Summit in 2014.

Considering all the above, the Prime Minister's political performance may raise some questions, particularly at a moment in which the Dutch government is directly faced with increasing pressure to act, and even take the lead, in the polarizing debate. After the advice of the UN experts, Paul de Leeuw, renowned Dutch television comedian, singer, and actor, put some more pressure on political leaders and the Dutch parliament. Impressed and inspired by the Oscar-winning movie, *12 Years a Slave*, he stirred up the debate at the end of March 2014. "It is most important," said De Leeuw, in the widely liked television talk show, *De Wereld Draait Door*, "that children are able to celebrate the Saint Nicholas feast without any racist component." According to De Leeuw, it is necessary that politicians, including Mark Rutte, express an explicit opinion on the matter in favor of change, as citizens do not succeed to work it out together. To achieve this, he handed over 151 copies of *12 Years A Slave* to the parliament, together with a letter that voiced his appeal.¹⁴

How can we understand Rutte's response and, more generally, the unwillingness of a Dutch majority to reflect on Black Pete and his offending char-

13 <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21588960-debate-holiday-tradition-exposes-racial-attitudes-zwarte-piet-racism>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5X6R6A-bgc>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vU-OP3ZClhY> (last visited May 3, 2014). Take special notice, *The Economist* was certainly not the only international magazine that reported these events.

14 <http://dewerelddraaitdoor.vara.nl/media/311734> (last visited May 3, 2014).

acteristics? The defensive and increasingly hostile attitudes may be hard to grasp, especially in view of the cherished Dutch self-image that “stresses being a tolerant, small and just ethical nation” (Wekker 2014:174; see Jordan 2014:206), proudly bringing out its freedom of expression, consensus-based model of decision-making (the “*polder model*”) and recognition of pluralistic Dutch cultural values (see Smith 2014:230–231). It appears, however, that despite its good reputation, “Dutch tolerance,” might better be interpreted as “passive tolerance,” which comes close to “passive intolerance” (Hondius 2014), “indifference” (Ghorashi 2014), and ultimately evasion and denial. Accordingly, there is a strong tendency to ignore and/or reject race issues and racism. The editors of the recently published volume *Dutch Racism* (Essed & Hoving 2014a) take (institutionalized) ignorance, together with innocence, avoidance, and denial as key features in their understanding of (everyday) racism in the Netherlands. The controversy over the figure of Black Pete shows how claims of innocence and strategies of ignorance and denial work: Black Pete is nothing more than a fun-loving, well-meaning children’s friend whose blackface appearance results from chimney soot. Racist connotations or references to slavery are, subsequently, easily waved aside (i.e., ignored). In this way, innocence and ignorance are forms of evasion and even denial, which easily fits in with the Dutch inclination to reject colonial history as relevant for understanding racism or, as Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving (2014b:11) put it: “Dominant discourses *miss* historical explanations and *dismiss* the connection between present ethnic humiliations and the brutality of colonization, slavery, and antisemitism.” Actually, they argue, there is in the Netherlands no shared discourse to address racism, while lately “there is a sense of self-satisfaction and smugness about ignoring the issue—racism is seen as an outdated topic that has no relevance to the twenty-first century” (Essed & Hoving 2014b:11). Also Smith (2014:233) who aims to explain why criticism and protests regarding Black Pete fail to provoke Dutch reflection and why they have little effect on how the holiday tradition is practiced, comes to the same conclusion: “Avoidance of open discussions about race is the norm.” Or, as Dutch historian Dienke Hondius (2014:274) notes, “We don’t do race.”

Almost all authors of *Dutch Racism* agree on this overriding feature of “smug ignorance,” that is “(aggressively) rejecting the possibility to know” (Essed & Hoving 2014b:24). It remains to be seen, however, if the “nation’s main strategy” (Essed & Hoving 2014b:10) of ignorance, avoidance, and denial will suffice after the latest events in the Black Pete controversy. Despite massive resistance, there are signs that the representation and role of Black Pete will be adjusted; a few days after his much-discussed performance, Rutte gave his apologies for his “unfortunate remark” as he called it, and he personally apologized to the Prime

Minister of Curaçao, Ivar Asjes. Meanwhile, various stakeholders from both sides of the debate, including critics like Quincy Gario and the pro-Black Pete Sint Nicolaas Genootschap (Saint Nicholas Alliance), were consulted to discuss the future of Black Pete. The consultations, led by the Nederlands Centrum voor Volkscultuur en Immaterieel Erfgoed (VIE, the Dutch Center for Popular Culture and Immaterial Heritage), secretly started in October 2013 and aimed to produce a list of shared principles and draw some conclusions before summer 2014. However, the director of the VIE, Ineke Strouken, is cautious: "this might be the beginning of a solution." Strouken expects that an adequate resolution will take years because advocates and opponents are hard to reconcile.¹⁵

The abiding refusal to find an acceptable compromise can be understood by the critical analysis of the various contributing articles in *Dutch Racism*: conscious evasion of "race talk" (Hondius 2014), ignoring or silencing of critique (especially regarding Dutch colonial history and the legacy of slavery), and hostile, offensive responses to critical voices leave little room for debate, let alone pro-actively promoted change. In the following sections we want to take these insights a step further, first by examining the historical context of Dutch slavery and colonialism. We will show how slavery and colonialism are inextricably linked to hegemonic systems of exchange and commodification as well as the circulation of images and discourses of black bodies (see Brienens 2014; Jordan 2014; Smith 2014). The latter, subsequently, seeks to elucidate both the dynamics between Saint Nicholas and his servant Black Pete, and the way Black Pete continues to be "consumed" in present-day Dutch society. However, we explicitly do not aim to "prove" that Black Pete is grounded in this history. Rather we want to demonstrate that it, nevertheless, provides an unavoidable background for the understanding of the controversy over Black Pete, and the reasons why present-day emotions are running so high. Conceptually, we will argue that the invented Black Pete tradition marks, in Pierre Bourdieu's (1990) terms, "a white Dutch habitus" in which this historical context is so conveniently ignored or forgotten. In any case, this notion brings us back, then, to the recent developments described above, as they expose cracks in this "habitus," making it increasingly difficult to ignore black people's perspectives.¹⁶

15 Geheim overleg over toekomst Zwarte Piet in *AD/Algemeen Dagblad*, March 28, 2014; Al maanden geheim overleg over toekomst Zwarte Piet in *de Volkskrant*, March 28, 2014.

16 We want to thank the anonymous reviewer #1 for suggesting this intelligible formulation.

Interlude: On Approach, Representation, and the Black Body

Before continuing with the history of Dutch colonialism and the legacy of slavery, this section highlights some of the theoretical and methodological approaches that are central in our unraveling of the Black Pete phenomenon. Besides Bourdieu's conceptualization of a white Dutch habitus and, importantly, the self-preservation of it, we draw on bell hooks' (1992) notion of white supremacy to illuminate the complexity of "interlocking systems of domination which define our reality" (hooks in Jordan 2014:209).¹⁷ Instead of implying an all-embracing, systematic domination, the analysis focuses on connections between "sites of diverse knowledge," without losing sight of the individual stories and experiences of people making those connections. Following Anna Tsing's (2005) method of "patchwork ethnography," the article uses "ethnographic fragments" to show that there is not necessarily a master narrative. Yet, each element is not independent: patchwork ethnography and fragmented examples allow for sometimes incomparable and contradicting knowledge, stressing "zones of awkward engagement where words [and experiences] mean something different across a divide" (Tsing 2005:xi).

The engagements and examples mentioned in this article, unfolded through observations, (group) interviews, personal interactions, and informal conversations with both black and white Dutch people. The first investigations into the Saint Nicholas tradition started in the fall of 2012, a couple of weeks before the national arrival in the city of Roermond. The findings are analyzed in combination with an examination of online resources, academic literature, and public debates concerning the legacy of Dutch slavery and the Black Pete tradition.¹⁸ By using notions of a "white habitus" and white supremacy in this analysis, we demonstrate that the Black Pete tradition is neither an isolated nor a fixed phenomenon, but rather embedded in broader systems of domination, and part of a larger body of stereotypical representations. It is therefore relevant to understand how and why Black Pete, "once a liminal figure of fertility and winter angst" (Smith 2014:228), became portrayed as a black body, including prominent phenotypical features like a solid black skin color, thick bright red lips, and curly or woolly dark hair. In using the term "black body," however, we have to acknowledge that there is obviously no monolithic, singular black body, but that various bodies and body images—regarding e.g., gender, sexuality, class,

17 Gloria Jean Watkins. Her pen name, "bell hooks," is intentionally not capitalized.

18 Karina Goulordava has primary responsibility for the interviews and conversations in this article.

race, ethnicity, age, health—are implicated differently in hierarchies of meaning and regimes of power. Hence, the body and experiences of embodiment are always complex and multifaceted, layered, and nuanced at different levels of human subjective experience, social interaction, institutional arrangements, and historical and cultural processes (Waskul & Vannini 2006:2). Heeding interactionist theory and taking into account existing discursive orders in society, we therefore approach the body as a “vehicle” bearing the representational traces of history, culture, and power (see Waskul & Vannini 2006:11), which in this case particularly refers to racist representations and meanings of the black body as both inferior and entertaining, sometimes even as evil or polluting. The term, however, is not meant to simply objectify the black Dutch body, but to explore its racialization, politicization, and commodification within the tradition of Black Pete and the subsequent relation to value. Such a focus on the black body adds to an understanding of the controversial character, not only as a contested symbol of Dutch racism, but also, to put it in Mimi Sheller’s (2003) terms, “a commodified source of pleasure and consumption.”

Colonialism, the Legacy of Dutch Slavery, and the Invention of a Tradition

When inquiring into the origins of Black Pete, a wide array of possible information sources exist. To gain access to the public discussion in a larger forum, the website *Stuff Dutch People Like* is insightful.¹⁹ This site keeps a blog summarizing aspects of Dutch traditions listing Black Pete as a prominent item. The short, five-paragraph summary states that the origin of Black Pete is unclear. Dozens of pages of reader comments, many of which argue the character’s origin, follow the short summary. Comments are left by Dutch citizens and foreigners as well as Dutch ex-pats living abroad.²⁰ The possible origins presented were similar to those noted from off-line conversations and sources, including references to a devil figure tamed by Saint Nicholas, a warrior of the Germanic god Wodan (or his Norse variant Odin), a Moorish sailor, or an enslaved boy saved by Saint Nicholas.

19 <http://stuffdutchpeoplelike.com> (last visited May 3, 2014).

20 Although internet sources such as *Stuff Dutch People Like* present various disadvantages with regard to validity, particularly due to anonymity and/or lack of information about those writing the comments, the blog provided many other fields of relevant information. Contrary to numerous Dutch Internet forums, this English blog discussed significant sensitive issues concerning Black Pete from both insider and outsider perspectives.

In his introductory remarks in *The Invention of Tradition*, Eric Hobsbawm (1983:1) makes the claim that “traditions which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent and sometimes invented.” Considering the many rumored origins of Black Pete, it is argued that the tradition of the Saint Nicholas servant has changed overtime.²¹ This is important to understand, as the tradition is fiercely defended due to its believed long history. However, the character of Black Pete is relatively modern and invented. Black Pete first appears in 1850 in *Sint Nicolaas en zijn knecht* (*Saint Nicholas and His Servant*) a children’s book authored by Dutch schoolteacher Jan Schenkman (Helsloot 2012). The book portrays a white Saint Nicholas and a black servant (Schenkman 1988). Two areas of interest are worth mentioning in this invention of Black Pete including: the links between the significance of the “color” black and Black Pete’s African heritage, and the connections between (the legacy of) slavery and Black Pete’s role as a black servant.

In many, but not all cultures, the use or appearance of black often signifies evil, death, mystery, and an overall negative connotation (Faber 2004; Gergen 1967:397). In the comment section of the blog *Stuff Dutch People Like*, many readers relate Black Pete’s origins with the devil or other unworldly characters, black ravens or dark mythology, all things associated with shades of black or that are black in appearance. Concerning the dark devilish character, it is speculated that Saint Nicholas tamed the devil that accompanied him—enchained—throughout the Middle Ages (Blakely 1993:45). In other European traditions, Saint Nicholas is often accompanied by a different devilish or otherworldly character, which has received a variety of names over the years. Often this character is portrayed as hairy, dark, with horns, and associated with darkness (Blakely 1993:45; Nederveen Pieterse 1990, 1998). In Germanic folklore, this character is known as “Knecht Ruprecht,” who accompanies Saint Nicholas to assist him with punishing or rewarding children. This version of Saint Nicholas’ servant is often depicted as dark in color, monstrous/devilish, and with horns. In Austria, Northern Italy, and other parts of Europe this figure is called “Krampus,” who more closely resembles common portrayals of the devil and has hooves, horns, and a monstrous tongue. In his book *Blacks in the Dutch World*, Allison Blakely discusses the tradition of Black Pete and the negative connotations of the “color” black. Blakely (1993:63) states:

The likening of the Zwarte Man (Black Man) [one name given to previous Saint Nicholas companions] to a Negro in color shows that the bridge

21 Bal 2004; Gravenberch 1998; Hassankhan 1988; Helsloot 2005, 2012; Jordan 2014; Nederveen Pieterse 1998; Smith 2014.

between fantasy and reality may often be very short. As in the case of Zwarte Piet, some looking in the real world for human types with which to associate the black monsters in the world of the imagination are drawn to comparisons using black people.

Connecting the many culturally negative connotations of the "color" black with the dark colored, evil character accompanying Saint Nicholas, Black Pete resembles aspects of the myth in human form. The negative connotation of the "color" black and its application to black skin is evident in Dutch culture including in songs, card games, jokes, and expressions. For example, a popular song, sung during the Saint Nicholas holiday, includes the lyrics "even though I am black as soot, my intentions are good," indicating the link between mischievousness and blackness, specifically the black skin of Black Pete. Martinique-born, French-Algerian psychiatrist Frantz Fanon, discusses the negative connotation of the "color" black and its application to black bodies in his 1952 work *Black Skin, White Masks* (Fanon [2008]:146):

The torturer is the black man, Satan is black, one talks of shadows, when one is dirty one is black-whether one is thinking of physical dirtiness or of moral dirtiness. It would be astonishing, if the trouble were taken to bring them all together, to see the vast number of expressions that make the black man the equivalent of sin. In Europe, whether concretely or symbolically, the black man stands for the bad side of the character.

The connection between black and sin, as discussed by Fanon, is found in various aspects of Dutch culture, such as the Saint Nicholas song mentioned previously. In the tradition, the white/black and good/evil paradigm is exemplified in the skin colors of the two holiday characters. Saint Nicholas is the saint, the symbol of purity. Replacing unworldly figures, Black Pete appears as the human representation of all negative black connotations, which Fanon mentions in the above quotation (see also Smith 2014).

It is important to remember that Black Pete appeared in 1850 as Dutch colonization and enslavement of Africans continued.²² During colonization, Africans were portrayed as savage, heathen, and as lesser beings than their white colonizers and enslavers (Sheller 2003:109). It is not surprising that such representations contributed to superior notions of whiteness and derogatory perceptions of blackness, placing the black body in a subordinate position

22 Slavery in the Dutch colonies formally came to an end in 1863.

within a larger system of white supremacy. It is in this historical context that Schenkman created the figure of Black Pete, or as Smith (2014:228) argues: "Drawing off the old ... Pagan tradition of the nature/troll-like helper, Schenkman reimagined the figure as an exotic servant/slave for the saint." Is it possible then, that Schenkman was reproducing a white master/black servant paradigm that was embedded in the system of slavery? How were relations between whites and blacks represented to white Dutch audiences at the time? In viewing Dutch paintings from the years 1668–1818, a number of works of art depict enslaved Africans at the service of a white master. In the works observed, many included a young, enslaved African male of adolescent or preadolescent age serving at least one white master (Brienen 2014; Schreuder 2008). Of course it is unknown whether Schenkman had exposure to these works or similar ones. However, his depiction of the white master/black servant relationship in *Sinterklaas en zijn knecht* closely resembles the depictions in these works of art and the iconography of that time.

Schenkman chose a black body to represent the previous evil, devilish figure. It is interesting to note that readers of *Stuff Dutch People Like* also saw this connection over 160 years later. Many readers justified the black skin of Black Pete stating that it was simply a linear progression from devilish origins to black skin, and one that holds no racist origins. In her text accompanying Anna Fox's photo collection titled *Zwarte Piet*, Mieke Bal (in Fox & Bal 1999:2; see also Bal 2004) recalls her experiences as a white child with Black Pete. She discusses this unspoken understanding of the presence of good and evil, demonstrated in the skin colors of the two holiday characters, stating that "the symbolisms of white equals good, black equals evil, were not spoken aloud." The tradition and its symbolism seem to be accepted due to an almost commonsense mentality. The latter fits in Hobsbawn's notion of "invented tradition," particularly when he argues that it "is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms or behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past" (Hobsbawn 1983:1). Did Schenkman create Black Pete based on such "accepted rules" that deemed black to be negative and applied them to black skin? If so, Black Pete is an invented tradition that has reproduced this notion overtime, mimicking not only the ideologies surrounding race, but also essential aspects of enjoyment in dominance and submission (see Smith 2014).

As is well known, the overall system of slavery was based in the oppression of enslaved Africans that forced them into unfree labor, and a position of exploitation and inferiority. The latter is still manifest in the present-day masquerade, especially in the dynamic between saint and servant. The distinction of posi-

tion and, hence, value between Saint Nicholas and Black Pete is for instance clearly visible in the arrival parade as described in the introduction of this article. Consider also Joy Smith's (2014:225–226) observations:

Saint Nicholas rides on a horse while Black Pete walks, runs and jumps, the Saint speaks impeccable Dutch, while Pete stumbles through the language, the Saint is noble and takes his yearly duties seriously, while Black Pete is irresponsible, and does all the heavy lifting when delivering toys and sliding down chimneys during the Sinterklaas season.

Saint Nicholas obviously occupies a virtuous position, one that must be protected and served. In each and every parade, there is also only one Saint Nicholas. If he is hurt or missing, the parade cannot continue. His body is valued. In contrast, each city's parade features many Black Petes who play different, though always submissive roles, such as the "lead Pete" (*"hoofd Piet"*), acrobat, musician or stilt walker, which are reminiscent of the many roles required of black people (Blakely 1993:275). The black bodies are ubiquitous, anonymous in their number, and in a sense devalued in these parades. As Saint Nicholas elegantly and proudly parades atop his white horse, the Black Petes service the crowds with entertainment and sweets. Besides, some of them speak Dutch with an accent that sounds childish or foolish, in order to add an additional source of entertainment. In some situations, this accent is meant to impersonate a Surinamese person speaking Dutch. Although this aspect has been changing, the trait clearly links Black Pete to the Afro-Surinamese, most of who are descendants of enslaved Africans (see Helsloot 2005; Smith 2014).

The dynamic of enjoyment in dominance and submission, as depicted here, divulges a long history of the objectification of black bodies for the purpose of amusement, which is reproduced at the arrival of Saint Nicholas and Black Pete in the Netherlands. In former times, black bodies were frequently displayed in zoos and exhibitions for Europeans to analyze and gawk (Magubane 2001:830; Westerman 2004). One famous example is that of Sara Baartman, a Khoikhoi woman from South Africa who came to Europe where she faced humiliation and was named "Hottentot Venus," as her "exotic" black body fascinated Europeans. Baartman was sold to a circus and later became a sex worker, all before her premature death at the age of twenty-five, after which her body was medically examined, molded, and put on further display (Magubane 2001:817). Baartman's emotional and physical pain was ignored as her body was seen only as a source of entertainment and pleasure; an object to be gazed at. Saidiya Hartman (in Smith 2014:224–226) considers this relation between pleasure and subjection as the fundamental organizing principle for slavery. Within the sub-

missive role of Black Pete, the character's body is also viewed as a source of entertainment and pleasure for a principally white audience. Often, a Black Pete is comically hurt. This act is not met with empathy as the fictional pain is performed to extract laughter. Reciprocally, the white bodies that perform Black Pete derive entertainment from their participation in this tradition. In the parade, it is a pleasure, even an honor to play the lead Black Pete who is constantly at the service of Saint Nicholas. In the comment section of *Stuff Dutch People Like*, mentioned previously, many readers stated that they enjoy performing Black Pete and look forward, every year, to this "playful tradition."

The Saint Nicholas feast, in other words, still reproduces the expectation of entertainment from black (blackfaced) bodies and continues the white supremacy/black inferiority paradigm (see Helsloot 2005:268): the Black Petes are present for the service of a white Saint Nicholas and the pleasure of a mostly white audience. As such, the body of Black Pete, comparable to Sara Baartman's and other exhibited black bodies, principally holds value in its ability to entertain. Its humanity, culture, history, and dignity are erased and its voice is silenced. This notion is supported by Paul Gilroy (1993:88), when he argues that "racisms work insidiously and consistently to deny both historicity and cultural integrity to the artistic and cultural fruits of black life" (see also Essed & Hoving 2014b). As mentioned above, various movements and projects have worked to adjust or eradicate (particular aspects of) the Black Pete tradition. One of the first recorded projects, titled "Witte Pietenplan" (White Pete Plan), already dates back to 1968. Several projects followed.²³ Most of them aimed at introducing a black Saint Nicholas or blue-, red-, yellow-, and green-faced Petes or rainbow Petes. But these initiatives did not realize structural change. Quinsy Gario's much debated, ongoing art project *Zwarte Piet Is Racisme* and his recent media actions seem to have more far-reaching impact. We have seen that the resulting uproar in 2013 and 2014 makes it increasingly difficult to carry on in ignorance and denial, especially for those people who take pride in their culture's tolerance—even if just a myth. At the same time, pro-Black Pete activists, supported by a considerable part of the Dutch population (think of the "Pietitie" page) hold on to common sense beliefs that refuse to reflect on the dynamics mentioned above. In discussions with defenders of Black Pete, many

23 An in-depth review of all the projects exceeds the scope of this article. For a detailed overview see Helsloot 2005. The documentary film that resulted from the earlier mentioned art project *Read the Masks* displays also a list of initiatives. One of the most recent projects is "Ceci N'est Pas de l'Histoire" in Utrecht, May 20, 2013, see <http://cecineestpasblog.tumblr.com> (last visited May 3, 2014).

stated that the Saint Nicholas feast actually honors the black Dutch community as the Black Pete figure has a prominent role in the holiday tradition and is favored over Saint Nicholas by most Dutch. But does the tradition really honor the Black Pete character and, at a more abstract level, the black body, including its culture and history, or does it merely reproduce its devaluation, only serving to entertain and bring pleasure to a mostly white population? The many examples of "ignorant" statements of Black Pete defenders, then, rather show the immanence of a white supremacy and habitus, dictating which notions and representations count as legitimate and which not (see also Jordan 2014).

The Self-Preservation of the White Dutch Habitus and the Value of the Black Body in the Netherlands

In a number of works, bell hooks states that we live in an "imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy," implying that nonwhite, nonmale, and non-western bodies are assigned less value than their white, male, western counterparts in a capitalist society (e.g., hooks 1992, 2004). This notion is a useful lever to understand the (re)production of a hierarchy of people and the ways black bodies are employed as a resource and/or locus of exploitation and excess of entertainment (see Jordan 2014). Valued bodies are protected and their physical life is valued. These bodies are further valued and recognized for their contribution to the sociopolitical system described by hooks. Other bodies, on the contrary, are less valued. They are considered disposable, and their cultures, histories, and languages are deemed inferior and unnecessary within the system. Paradoxically, these bodies do hold value, but only insofar as they can be exploited by this system, with no other recognition of their contribution. There is a hegemony and hegemonizing logic, hooks reminds us, wherein all bodies can be used for their physical labor, but some bodies are also allowed to contribute to other domains, such as culture, language, art, music, et cetera. Fanon (2008:21) uses his experiences with patients to illustrate the absence of value in black history, language or culture, as he writes:

I meet a Russian or a German who speaks French badly. With gestures I try to give him the information that he requests, but at the same time I can hardly forget that he has a language of his own, a country, and that perhaps he is a lawyer or engineer there. In any case, he is foreign to my groups, and his standards must be different. When it comes to the case of the Negro, nothing of the kind. He has no culture, no civilization, no "long historical past."

Fanon encounters that his culture and history are not acknowledged, resounding the mechanisms of colonization and enslavement: “the Negro” was only valued for his labor necessary to maintain a system of exchange and commodification, and to ensure its growth. So less valued were the lives and bodies of enslaved Africans, especially in comparison to the commodities that they produced, that:

The over-working of the Negro and sometimes the using up of his life in 7 years’ of labor became a factor in a calculated and calculating system. It was no longer a question of obtaining from him a certain quantity of useful products. It was now a question of production of surplus-labor itself.

LAWRENCE 1975:6

In other words, these men and women fit into the system until they could no longer provide labor, at which point they became valueless. Although Lawrence discusses the production of cotton, similar statements could be made concerning the production of other commodities, such as sugar, in the Dutch colonies (e.g., Oostindie 1993:4). In her book *Consuming the Caribbean*, Sheller (2003:75) states that “the Dutch ... pioneered the creation of a global trade empire stitched together by the flow of commodities and wealth from colonial peripheries back to the metropolitan core.” The enslaved Africans were the necessary tools to maintain and ensure the trade of commodities. As a matter of fact, they became commodities as well: their bodies, bought and sold and becoming the property of the slave owner, were essential to produce the commodities that fueled new forms of consumption and lifestyles in Europe (Sheller 2003:23, 81; see also Mintz 1985; Stuart 2012). They also contributed to the system in their ability to reproduce and, in the particular case of women, in their forced sexual availability, ensuring continuous free labor with their offspring (Kempadoo 2004:3). Furthermore, enslaved African women were used for sex work and as sources of sexual pleasure for the slave owner and other white, male plantation workers and guests (Kempadoo 2004:31, 40). In this respect, enslaved Africans, male and female, had as little agency over their own bodies as over their labor, and whether for the production of commodities or sexual labor, they were principally used for the benefit of capitalist trade (Mintz 1985:54).

Altogether, black bodies were assigned meaning based upon physical characteristics and productivity and we might wonder if these bodies were only valued as long as their physical (productive or entertaining) contribution persists. Within the holiday character of Black Pete, we see elements of this logic both

in the creation of the character and in the way the tradition is practiced today. With this, history has been separated from the character and "forgotten." In his notion of *habitus*, Pierre Bourdieu (1990:56) refers to a similar cycle of repeated history that is simultaneously forgotten. He defines *habitus* as "embodied history, internalized as second nature and so forgotten as history," and explains how the development of this *habitus* is dependent on history and memory (Bourdieu 1990:54):

The *habitus*, a product of history, produces individual and collective practices—more history—in accordance with the schemes generated by history. It ensures the active presence of past experiences, which, deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, thought and action, tend to guarantee the 'correctness' of practices and their constancy over time, more reliably than all formal rules and explicit norms.

Regarding this constancy, we see that the less value that was assigned to black bodies due to the negative connotations of black, has been (re)produced during slavery, and appears to continue in the "Dutch *habitus*" today, at minimum in the tradition of Black Pete. As the "*habitus*" is inherently resistant to change and protects itself by always reinforcing its dispositions (Bourdieu 1990:61), it continues to demonstrate self-defense. In *Understanding Everyday Racism*, Philomena Essed (1991) argues: "the dominant group believes that their version of reality and the 'truth' is right and objective." As a result, "[people of this group] are incapable of seeing the world from another point of view ... and they don't see the racism that is there" (Essed 1991:271; see Essed & Hoving 2014b). This solitary view of "truth" is a demonstration of the *habitus* and its self-protective properties. This is evident, at least not until recently, in the absence of a constructive national discussion on race in the Netherlands, a lack of educational focus on the Dutch slave trade, and the defense of Black Pete by a majority of white Dutch citizens (see Essed & Hoving 2014b; Horton & Kardux 2004:64; Smith 2014). We have seen, for instance, that the white Dutch *habitus* is at work in the frequently used statement "but this is our tradition, we have been doing this for hundreds of years," to defend Black Pete. Here the collective, "white Dutch *habitus*" manifests itself as many people state the same reasoning.

The denial of racism, within the tradition of Black Pete, is a demonstration of a "Dutch *habitus*" that over the centuries has "forgotten" its historical roots, such as the often forgotten, sheer invention of the Black Pete tradition in 1850. Applying Bourdieu's notion of "*habitus*" helps us to understand the continual separation of race and racism from the holiday tradition of Black Pete, which

is evidence of a persistent historical forgetfulness. The seminal ideas of Mary Douglas (1966:37–38) work, thereby, in tandem with Bourdieu's conception of the self-preservation of the "habitus." She argues that the more consistent our experience is with the past, the more confidence we can have in our assumptions, whereby "we find ourselves ignoring or distorting ['uncomfortable facts, which refuse to be fitted in']" so that they do not disturb these established assumptions. Hence, as the white Dutch habitus has remained self-protective for a long time, it has reinforced a certain image of a collective white Dutch consciousness preventing it from seeing racism in the Black Pete character. Such are the workings of "smug ignorance" (Essed & Hoving 2014b), which Essed (1991:274) explained in earlier work as follows:

Whites would not see the racism that is there. The reinforcement of their nondiscriminatory self-image leads to further reluctance to deal with racism in general or to admit racism. Because the Dutch have strongly internalized the idea that they are not to discriminate, they are more reluctant to acknowledge that racism is a Dutch problem as well.

Due to constant social reinforcement of a nondiscriminatory white Dutch consciousness, any challenge to the "white habitus" is strongly resisted and quick explanations are used as a defense. Challenging facts that cannot be refuted are swiftly ignored. We have shown, for example, how many white Dutch people defended the black skin color of Black Pete by stating that the blackness is a result of rubbing against chimney soot as he travels up and down chimneys to deliver presents. Questions such as "why are his clothes clean and what is the reasoning for the Afro hair and lip makeup?" were unanswered. Due to the nature of the "habitus," the majority of white Dutch people ignore this uncomfortable fact, meanwhile also ignoring, forgetting, denying or being unaware of any historical memory of the abuse of black bodies.

Critical antagonists such as Quinsy Gario are aware of these dynamics. In November 2012 we discussed the meaning of Black Pete within Dutch society and the significance of calling the tradition racist.²⁴ Gario explained that realizing this racism is a painful and unpleasant process, especially as it would require white Dutch people to reflect on their childhood, since Black Pete is a tradition for children. Gario stated that confirming that Black Pete is indeed a racist tradition would result in admitting to one's own personal racism. As elaborated above, such realization is something that the habitus staunchly resists.

24 Interview by Karina Goulordova in Amsterdam, November 2012.

We can encounter this resistance in every age group. During an interview session at a predominantly white Dutch high school, I, Karina Goulordava, asked a class of 15- and 16-year-old students about the controversial tradition.²⁵ Unanimously the students defended Black Pete with responses feeding off of one another in rapid succession. Reasons, such as "we already don't have a greater issue of racism here so we don't need to make this little thing an issue" and "but I don't have a problem with it," were used to defend the tradition. In asking the students what they would say to an Afro-Dutch opponent of Black Pete, one student stated, "If you talk about it this way, you make it a problem and make it racist." Another student noted, "But some black people play Black Pete too." The feelings of black people who oppose Black Pete were disregarded and deemed illegitimate. During the conversation with Gario, he posed the question "who gets to decide what is racist?" The student interview demonstrates the notion presented by Essed (1991; see also Essed & Hoving 2014b) that the dominant group only sees one truth and is therefore blind to the racism due to the self-protective qualities of the habitus. Moreover, the dominant group feels the right to define what is and is not racist (see Jordan 2014:215).

Due to this, Black Pete remains, at least until the latest events in 2013 and 2014, a means "by which whiteness colonizes and mediates blackness in the public sphere" (Jordan 2014:215). Uncomfortable and challenging meanings are still systematically ignored, endorsing a caricature of blackness, in which Black Pete is persistently portrayed as inferior, silly and aloof, while his black body is relegated to the form of an object that might be used for entertainment and, as will be shown in the last section of this article, serves as a continuous source for commodification and consumption.

Black Pete and the Commodification of the Black Dutch Body

Before analyzing how the black body is "consumed" through the holiday tradition of Black Pete, it is important to remember that the black body became a commodity during European colonization and enslavement of Africans, in which Dutch companies and later the empire participated (Barbosa 1987:359). Black bodies were traded, valued for their labor power, and desired as a tool that brought profit to not only white slave owners, but to various sectors of white dominated, Dutch business society. In discussing the economic benefits of the Dutch slave trade, Gert Oostindie (1995:3) argues that:

25 This interview session was conducted in November 2012 in the province of South Holland.

If any one country could be called upon to confirm that an intense involvement in the Atlantic slave trade was fully compatible with a record of early capitalism and modernity at home, the Netherlands would be a perfect case. There is no dearth of studies underlining the astonishing economic growth and prosperity of the Dutch Republic. This growth encompassed virtually every sector of the economy, ranging from agriculture through industry to trade and banking.

Much of the benefit came from the selling of commodities produced by enslaved Africans, but also from the commodification and selling of black bodies.²⁶ As shown in the sections above, black bodies were additionally used as a commodity that resulted in pleasure and entertainment. Especially black female bodies were seen and used as a source of constantly available sexual pleasure (Kempadoo 2004:40), and black bodies were brought to Europe, including the Netherlands, to be exhibited (e.g. Magubane 2001:830). Later, black bodies were further commodified to sell commodities. Caricatured images of black men, women, and children were placed on hundreds of products to generate profits for white owned businesses. The image of black bodies, often separated into just parts, appeared on a variety of products including tobacco, coffee, liquor, cleansers, rice farina, candy, shoe polish, and toothpaste (Blakely 1993:164). Today, black bodies are still used as images to sell products, and thus continue to be commodified.

Directly following bell hooks' (1992:23) statement that "within commodity culture, ethnicity becomes spice, seasoning that can liven up the dull dish that is mainstream white culture," we might argue that black bodies have been used to "spice up" mainstream, white supremacist societies for centuries—whether it was by providing actual spices or through the commodification and exoticization of their bodies. When considering Black Pete, the commodification of black bodies in this Dutch holiday tradition can be contextualized in a very long history of direct and indirect consumption of black bodies (see Sheller 2003). The enslaved Africans were used to produce commodities such as sugar, cotton, and tobacco but without their forced labor, these products would not have existed. In other words, through the consumption of these products, consumers were (indirectly) consuming the enslaved Africans.

26 Please note that findings about tremendous economic benefits are also criticized. Different scholars (e.g. Emmer 1974, 2000; Oostindie 1993, 1995; Postma 1990, 2005; Postma & Enthoven 2003) have discussed the extent of the (alleged) profits, whereby positions and findings are divided.

This pattern of commodification and consumption of black bodies persists into today's commodity driven consumer society. For instance, in her book, *No Logo* (1999:77–78), Naomi Klein chronicles how the fashion brand Tommy Hilfiger used its popularity with inner-city black youth in the United States to reproduce and commodify their street style to generate more profit for the company. The street inspired "ghetto" fashion was then sold to the "larger market of middle-class white and Asian kids who mimic black style in everything from lingo to sports to music." It could be argued that the exposure and adaptation of black culture in the mainstream is a positive acknowledgement. A similar argument has been made in the case of Black Pete. In conversations with the white Dutch, many have stated that Black Pete cannot be a racist tradition because he is featured prominently in the most popular Dutch tradition. But does Dutch society and its retail not solely use the black body as a prop in its celebration? Again, hooks' notion might be helpful in understanding the subtle mechanism of "Othering," meaning, in this case, the "commodification of difference." This form of commodification, hooks (1992:29) explains, "promotes paradigms of consumption wherein whatever difference the Other inhabits is eradicated, via, exchange, by a consumer cannibalism that not only displaces the Other but denies the significance of that Other's history through a process of decontextualization." As discussed above, mixed ideas on the origins of Black Pete exist, but especially in the public realm almost none of them acknowledge the history of the enslavement of Africans that contributed to the white master/black servant paradigm. Thereby, the commodification of the black body through the figure of Black Pete ignores, denies, and decontextualizes the history of black bodies in the Netherlands. As in the example of Tommy Hilfiger, it is the dominant white culture that decides how aspects of blackness are incorporated.

In understanding the commodification of the black body within the tradition of Black Pete, it is insightful to scrutinize what makes Black Pete and, more specifically, how the black body is broken down into several body parts and characteristics. In order to become Black Pete, the skin must be painted, the lips are covered with lipstick, and an Afro wig completes the physical look. In some cases, the face paint is labeled as "Negro," thereby expelling any doubts that Black Pete is of African origin.²⁷ Once a black person is reduced to a black body and has been relegated to the form of an object, it becomes easier to further objectify its individual parts. According to Lesley Sharp (2000:289) "the body may be fragmented both metaphorically and literally through language,

27 See <http://zwartepietisracisme.tumblr.com/post/32279117892/for-those-who-dont-believe-negro-colored> (last visited May 3, 2014).

visual imagining, or the actual surgical reconstruction of specific parts.” In the case of the body of Black Pete, in three simple steps a white Dutch person is transformed into Black Pete, a black person. To complete the Black Pete look, one must wear appropriate clothing and accessories. Thus, Black Pete is represented through color, hair, and clothing. The experiences of the black body are decontextualized and eradicated through this act, as blackness becomes nothing more than store bought color, hair and clothes. Sharp (2000:293) further states that “commodification insists upon objectification in some form, transforming persons and their bodies from a human category into objects of economic desire.” In the case of Black Pete, blackness is broken down into individual body parts, thereby losing control over personhood. Sharp (2000:290) discusses this loss of control by stating that the commodification of the body results in depoliticizing it and denial of its sociality. In the tradition of Black Pete, the black body is depoliticized, as any reference to race, racism and/or the legacy of slavery is deemed irrelevant, whereas the black body experiences a denial of sociality as it is deemed the ultimate “Other.” While some white Dutch people argue that Black Pete allows a black person to occupy a prominent space in white dominated Dutch society, it is always the dominant society that allows him or her—through the body—to occupy this space, only for a short period of time each year, and only for the entertainment of a mostly white audience.

The ambiguous prominence of Black Pete during the months of November and December is further reflected in the numerous products displaying the character. Such marketing is reminiscent of Blakely’s (1993) research as he documented the use of the black body on labels and advertisements in order to sell products. Often, the images were caricatures of black people. The use of the image of Black Pete, a caricature of blackness on various commodities, is a continuation of this history. Of course, consumers can also purchase and consume the body of Saint Nicholas. However, this consumption does not take place within a long history of problematic consumption of white, male bodies, as such a history does not exist. Already months before the arrival of Saint Nicholas, Black Pete becomes a tool to sell products. A consumer can purchase a chocolate Black Pete to eat, and the figure is seen on candy, gingerbread, holiday wrapping paper, in window displays, and more. The image of Black Pete is used to encourage consumption and generate profit. Consequently, Black Pete becomes a product in various ways. Hence, from times of slavery the black body is used to sell products but also to consume and enjoy. As such, the black body continues to be commodified and consumed within and for the benefit of a predominantly “white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy,” to put it in bell hooks’ terms once again.

Coda

In discussing the popular Dutch Saint Nicholas celebration it has become clear that the controversial but beloved Black Pete character is far from ideologically empty. For centuries, blackness has been associated with evil, inferiority, servitude, exoticism, and entertainment. Of course, the present-day Black Pete cannot be related to all these attributes as his role has changed over time. For example, he has transformed from a frightening, dim-witted, and foolish speaker of broken Dutch, into a character of joy, and he is, according to many supporters of the tradition, virtually on equal footing with Saint Nicholas (see Brienens 2014; Smith 2014).²⁸ On the other hand, this playful, carnivalesque character still embodies a stereotypical caricature of blackness and a master-slave dynamic in order to entertain a mostly white audience. As such he is firmly entrenched in Dutch society and popular imagery. Quite paradoxically, he even has turned into a symbol of "authentic" Dutch culture and identity (Smith 2014).

Until recently, it seemed that criticism and protests against Black Pete failed to provoke any serious reflection on possible racist and/or insulting aspects of the holiday tradition: Black Pete is black and that cannot be changed. But current controversies over the black-faced character, particularly the 2013–14 public uproar and resulting debates, seriously challenge the future of Black Pete; Black Pete's role and representation may be adjusted if not entirely eliminated. Yet, the same events also show a strong refusal of a white Dutch majority to change "their" much-loved "old tradition" and find an acceptable compromise. Especially references to slavery and racist elements of the popular character are still massively and sometimes aggressively ignored and denied. The latter, we argued, is related to a remarkable Dutch inclination to conveniently "forget" colonial history and slavery too easily, which the editors of *Dutch Racism* (Essed & Hoving 2014a) coined as "smug ignorance." Yet in our understanding of the controversial holiday tradition, we have no other choice than to include the historical context of Dutch colonialism and slavery, and acknowledge the long history of the enslavement and trade of Africans, as well as their legacy in contemporary Dutch society. That does not mean that we wanted to prove that the Black Pete character is unmistakably grounded in this history, however, we rather aimed to show how this history provides the background for past and

28 Take special notice, although the article does not seek for an intersectional analysis of Black Pete, the gendered, feminized aspect of Black Pete is important to note, as white women mainly play him.

recent controversies, and the heated debates triggering passionate feelings and hostile responses.

Recently, a couple of scholars discussed the “Dutch strategy” of innocence, ignorance, and denial in relation to the persistent Black Pete tradition (Essed & Hoving 2014b; Jordan 2014; Smith 2014). Further to their contributions, we considered it crucial to examine the tradition not only through a postcolonial lens, but also in terms of a white capitalist supremacy for which we have drawn on bell hooks’ conceptualizations. Additionally, in analyzing why the tradition is still present in Dutch society and, until recently, quite reluctant to criticism and change, we delved into the logics of a “white Dutch habitus.” By employing Bourdieu’s notion of “habitus,” we exposed the subconscious areas of racism that have allowed the invented Black Pete tradition to exist since 1850 and to continue to exist. Moreover, the self-preservation and self-protective qualities of this “habitus” showed why and how the historical context of colonialism and slavery, earlier described in the article, is so conveniently “forgotten” by a Dutch majority. We further argued that this historical forgetfulness contributes to an ongoing devaluation, objectification, and consequently commodification and consumption of the black body in present-day Dutch society. In the last section of this article, we asserted that these processes do not only reproduce stereotypical representations of blackness, but also continue to reduce the black body to a commodity and a tool to sell products in favor of a predominantly white economy of pleasure.

Nevertheless, the recent debates and 2013–14 turmoil seem to attack the white Dutch habitus and its self-preserving nature, as we have argued earlier. To put it differently, they expose some serious cracks in it; albeit “habitus” is self-protective, it “is not fixed or permanent, and can be changed under unexpected situations or over a long historical period” (Navarro 2006:16). It remains to be seen, if this now leaves room for a broad-based critical reflection on the meaning of Black Pete.

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Review Articles



The Disposal of Atlantic History

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The Atlantic in World History. Karen Ordahl Kupperman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. x + 155 pp. (Paper US\$ 19.95)

A Cultural History of the Atlantic World, 1250–1820. John K. Thornton. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. xviii + 543 pp. (Paper US\$ 29.99)

Few readers of this journal need to be introduced to the concept of “Atlantic history,” which over the past few decades has either taken specialists in the early modern field by storm or run roughshod over them, depending on one’s point of view. Assiduous scholars have traced the origins and/or antecedents of the concept/approach/perspective known to us today as Atlantic history as far back as the late nineteenth century, but these same scholars and virtually everyone else in the early modern field would agree that the concept really came of age beginning in the 1990s. This being the case, it might be fun as well as illuminating to proceed analogically and apply to Atlantic history the divisions established by Jaques in his famous “seven ages of man” speech in Act II, Scene 7 of Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*. Once we do, we find that we can state with some confidence that Atlantic history is past its infancy and “whining school-boy” period, and is today in its third (lover) age of life, that is to say, “sighing like furnace.” Readers with good memories of their own school-day readings may recall that in Jaques’s speech the age informed by love is followed

immediately by a fourth (soldier) age. In this period, humans are “full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard, jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel, seeking the bubble reputation, even in the cannon’s mouth,” which sequence, if followed in this case, should make for increasingly lively debates in the years ahead!

If I was a bit harsh in 2002 when I wrote—with a nod to a formulation by Robert Reich—that Atlantic history was “one of those rare ideas that moved swiftly from obscurity to meaninglessness without any intervening period of coherence,” I believed at the time and continue to believe that this idea is hard to catch hold of, much less to pin down (Coclanis 2002:170). For the record, let me state that I am persuaded that Joyce Chaplin is correct in arguing that *the* “Atlantic Ocean” itself is a meaningful rather than anachronistic concept for students of early modern history (Chaplin 2009). Many authors, including Karen Ordahl Kupperman, have pointed out that during the early modern period, this ocean was often divided up into a discrete North Atlantic Ocean and a South Atlantic Ocean (or Aethiopian Sea), indeed, in some cases, into as many as five bands of seas. That said, Chaplin makes sense in arguing for the gradual emergence of a shared sense of the bounds of the “everyday Atlantic” during the early modern period. By this, she means that quotidian maritime experiences—travel, trade, storms, acts of depredation, etc.—led interested/knowledgeable/experienced parties to consider the Atlantic to be one ocean well before the nineteenth century.

To affirm that the concept of an Atlantic Ocean is meaningful does not, however, commit me in a logical sense to affirm that Atlantic *history* is as well. Even as Atlantic history rides high, other scholars have also expressed their doubts about Atlantic history, for various reasons and on sundry grounds. For example, a number of scholars have questioned whether there was in the early modern period sufficient unity between and among the peoples from the four continents rimming the Atlantic Basin to justify treating it as an integrated unit. Some of these scholars continue to believe that narrower conceptual/organizational schemes—focused around ethnic, national, or imperial lines—make better sense when considering the societies of the Atlantic Basin during the early modern period. Others privilege Atlantics “of different hues,” as Philip D. Morgan and Jack P. Greene have suggested, most notably White (European/Euro-American) or Black (African/African American) Atlantics, with some on the left—Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker come immediately to mind—listing toward a “Red” Atlantic comprised of workers, subalterns, and proles from Old World and New whatever their particular ethnic or national origins (Morgan & Greene 2009:6; Linebaugh & Rediker 2000).

Still others, myself included, believe that during the early modern period the “Atlantic World” cannot easily be hived off from people, plants and animals, pests, products, processes, and proceedings originating or associated primarily with other parts of the planet, not only in Asia, but also in “non-Atlantic” parts of Europe, Africa, and the Americas. To these scholars, Atlantic history *qua* concept (or, even in more relaxed form, *qua* perspective) is for many, but not all purposes less helpful in analytical terms than are other organizing schemes—global history among them.

Yet others complain that the current popularity of Atlantic history—popularity bordering on fetishization at times—has often led to serious distortions in historical understanding and explanation. To cite but one example from Europe: some exceedingly important (if rather more prosaic) European trades—the Baltic grain trade and the barge trade on the Rhine, most notably—have at a minimum suffered from relative neglect as a result of scholars’ haste to focus on splashier developments in the Atlantic Basin. Taken together, the above quibbles, cavils, demurrers, and qualifications regarding the utility of Atlantic history have led some scholars, including some basically sympathetic to the Atlantic conceit, perforce to issue a kind of Scotch verdict—not proven—when assessing whether or not Atlantic history as concept, approach, or perspective adds interpretive value when considered in a net rather than gross sense. In my view, it is likely that more and more will do so in the future. Hopefully, this shift will come sooner rather than later—during something akin to Shakespeare’s fifth age of man, which is characterized by justice and wisdom, rather than age six, senescence, or, alas, age seven, “one of second childishness and mere oblivion, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.”

In light of the above remarks, it might at first glance seem odd for me to write a review essay in the field of Atlantic history. Although I am certainly critical of some of the excesses of the Atlanticist project and although I am probably associated rather more with the field of global history, let me point out for the record that I have edited a book in Atlantic history, regularly participate in conferences and symposia devoted to Atlantic history, and am a frequent contributor to scholarly volumes relating to Atlantic history. President Lyndon Baines Johnson’s famous quotation regarding FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover might provide useful explanatory context at this point: “It’s probably better to have him inside the tent pissing out, than outside the tent pissing in” (Halberstam 1971). Without further ado, let us move on to another, more seemly task, to wit: a discussion of two important, but very different new books in Atlantic history.

The fact that the authors of these two books, Karen Ordahl Kupperman and John K. Thornton, are both eminent Atlantic historians, but Atlanticists who differ rather dramatically in background, training, interests, foci, and

orientations, testifies to the capaciousness of the field. Kupperman, Silver Professor of History at New York University, is an American who trained at Cambridge. She has written and written well about many topics in Atlantic history, but approaches the field primarily as a historian of English/British America. Although she has successfully integrated Africans, African Americans, and especially Native Americans in her many works, she would likely be situated by most specialists in the White Atlantic grouping, deeply steeped, as she is, in English/British archival and printed source materials emanating from or intermediated via Brits and Anglo-Americans.

John K. Thornton, who teaches at Boston University, is positioned elsewhere on the Atlanticist spectrum. Also an American—and, like Kupperman, from a military family—Thornton took his Ph.D. from UCLA, where his area of specialization was African history, particularly the Kingdom of Kongo in west central Africa. This kingdom's closest European relationship was with Portugal, and Thornton's expert use of Portuguese source materials in studying Kongo (and other parts of Portuguese west central and southwest Africa) has long been a hallmark of his scholarship. Although his work, as it developed, encompassed other parts of Africa—and, increasingly, other parts of the Atlantic world—Thornton's "Atlantic hue" would be considered "Black" by most scholars, his fundamental operating frame originating in, though hardly limited to Africa.

If their Atlanticist orientations (a.k.a. hues) differ, Kupperman and Thornton share certain scholarly traits: They are both prolific; they are both versatile, writing on numerous themes and areas; they have both won well-earned prizes and awards for their scholarship. As prominent senior scholars with distinguished publication records and numerous accolades to their credit, they are, in other words, ideally suited to write syntheses of the Atlantic history field, to which syntheses—Kupperman's *The Atlantic in World History* and Thornton's *Cultural History of the Atlantic World, 1250–1820*—we now turn.

Kupperman's brief survey—the text of which is only 124 pages—is part of Oxford University Press's New Oxford World History series. This series is nothing if not ambitious: Now nearing completion, it will ultimately run to thirty chronological, thematic/topical, and geographical volumes. According to the general editors of the series, Bonnie G. Smith and Anand Yang, volumes in the series differ from earlier "world histories" by being comprehensive; by stressing "connectedness and interactions of all kinds—cultural, economic, political, religious, and social—involving peoples, places, and processes"; by emphasizing comparisons; by offering multiple perspectives, including the perspectives of "ordinary people"; and by analyzing the roles of both local and global factors in major historical events. And, I might add, by doing all of these things succinctly in short books.

So how does Kupperman's contribution to the series stack up? Does it meet the above criteria? More importantly, does it enrich our understanding of Atlantic history specifically and history generally? To foreground things: *The Atlantic in World History* is a lively and interesting interpretive synthesis; it is thoughtful throughout and replete with insights; it is perforce selective and perhaps even a bit unbalanced in coverage; it is a book too short for its own good. Sometimes, less is in fact *less*, and more is *really* more.

Kupperman's book consists of five substantive chapters, along with a two-page introduction and a three-page epilogue. It should also be noted, though, that it includes some very useful "back material" in the form of a chronology, notes, suggestions for further reading, and an annotated list of helpful websites. Regarding matters of organization and coverage: in her thoughtful introduction, entitled "Thinking Atlanticly," Kupperman highlights several key themes that readers will encounter repeatedly as they read on—most notably, the permeability of the colonial empires and the importance of the breaches made therein; the "webs of interdependence" that, willingly or otherwise, affected all Atlantic peoples; and the high levels of risk and uncertainty that permeated the Atlantic world during the entire early modern period.

The first chapter treats Europe's outward thrust in the medieval and early modern periods and the (often strange, even outrageous) attempts by Europeans to comprehend the discoveries that resulted from said thrust. Chapter 2 focuses on pre-contact societies in Europe, Africa, and the Americas, and the beginnings of regular transoceanic contact among them. Chapter 3 discusses the settlement of the Americas by Europeans and Africans. Chapter 4 addresses the material bases of the colonies established by Europeans in the Americas, with an emphasis on commodities ("Foods, Drugs, and Dyes"). And the final chapter deals with the maturation of these colonies in the eighteenth century and their various roads to independence. In the brief epilogue, Kupperman offers readers a provocative little meditation on the elusive, ever shifting, highly contingent meaning of the Atlantic and its history.

In many ways, Kupperman's synthesis represents the regnant view regarding the Atlantic world. Most scholars today stress the theme of permeability and emphasize imperial breaches, for example, and her belief in the many structural/functional similarities and more or less symmetrical power relationships among European, Native American, and African societies interacting in the Atlantic world is at once standard and comforting to modern sensibilities. Those familiar with her earlier work will not be surprised to learn that Kupperman employs early travel accounts and narratives to excellent effect, nor to find that she proves herself yet again a master of the telling vignette. Where she falters is in her inability in this volume intelligibly to trace, let

alone explain change over time in the Atlantic world—surely the “stuff” of history—probably because of the constraints of the series format. Shortly after Kupperman introduces the *dramatis personae*, gets the colonies in the New World established, and briefly discusses the types of commodities the colonies produced, we find said colonies mature and the colonists with new senses of identity, which led some of them to get involved in movements to sever ties with the geopolitical entities that established colonies in the first place. If it's Tuesday, this must be Toussaint or Bolívar, as it were. Or, to revert back to Shakespearean imagery: another chapter or two, my kingdom for another chapter or two!

Perhaps Kupperman could pinch some text from Thornton's mammoth *Cultural History of the Atlantic World, 1250–1820*, a work as dense as the Atlantic is deep. Fortunately for readers, Thornton's volume—I use this particular noun intentionally here—is loaded with valuable information (drawn from sources in a half dozen languages) and rich insights, rendering worthwhile the tough passage through it. Thornton tells us in his preface that his study grew out of his lecture notes for a course in Atlantic history that he began teaching in the mid-1990s. Over time he added more and more material to these lectures, and began to formalize them by producing a complete written text, adding footnotes, employing scholarly sources rather than reference works, etc. By 2010, after a decade and a half of effort, he had succeeded in turning his notes into perhaps the most comprehensive study we have on the cultural history of the Atlantic world.

Thornton covers essentially the same period as Kupperman, and treats a number of the same topics and themes, albeit in far greater detail. His book is divided into four parts, comprising eleven chapters. Part I consists of a single chapter in which Thornton traces the early probes into and ultimate mastery of the Atlantic. In the three chapters in Part II, he fills in the European, African, and American “background” necessary to understand “the nature of encounter and its aftermath.” The “encounter” itself and its aftermath are covered in Part III. In Part IV Thornton describes the manner in which culture—broadly conceived to include language, aesthetics and the arts, and religious traditions—changed as a result of the encounter, and quickly runs through the Age of Revolution in the Americas, c. 1775–1825. He covers each of these topics and themes with great deliberation and method (a bulldozer in low gear might be the proper image here), leaving little unsaid or undisturbed. Important new findings crop up frequently, often in the middle of potted, textbook-like discussions of familiar subject matter.

Parts III and IV (“The Nature of Encounter and Its Aftermath” and “Culture Transition and Change”) offer cases in point. In Part III—three chapters

comprising over 150 pages of text—Thornton first differentiates between the processes of conquest, colonization, and contact, and then demonstrates in considerable detail which process occurred where and with what result. In his usage, *conquest* denotes a situation in which “there is a switch in sovereignty between states.” *Colonization* occurred “in areas where there was no native population ... or where the indigenous population could not be conquered,” generally because it was not organized into states or states sufficiently strong to “surrender or acknowledge a change in sovereignty.” In such areas, the indigenous population was “ultimately either displaced, enslaved, or eliminated” and the area repopulated with a new population brought in from elsewhere (pp. 157–58). To Thornton, *contact* pertains to Africa and liminal areas in the Americas akin to Richard White’s “middle ground” (1991:158):

where there was no change of sovereignty, no enslavement, and little population movement. It developed in areas where Europeans met established political and social orders that they could not overcome, displace, or enslave. In this situation, Europeans were forced to coexist with another society, interacting formally and informally through diplomacy and trade.

It is tempting, if a bit snide, to observe at this point that Thornton’s schematic—as operationalized in Chapters 5, 6, and 7—is to history what parsing is to grammar, but like parsing it is instructive in many ways, allowing us to analyze, interpret, and make sense of the varied trajectories of many different places over large chunks of time. And just to be clear (rather than snide), by large chunks of time I refer to the early modern period, not to the hours it takes to slog through said chapters.

The first three of the four chapters in Part IV of Thornton’s book—on transition and change in language, aesthetic expressions, and religion in the Atlantic world—are in many ways the strongest in the study, which is not surprising as the work was intended as one of cultural history rather than political or social history, let alone economic history. In these chapters, Thornton provides exceptionally rich—and, yes, detailed—discussions of the ways in which these aspects of culture changed as a result of population movements and interactions throughout the Atlantic world during the early modern period, leading to always interesting and sometimes brilliant new forms and styles of a syncretic or hybridic nature. Writing as an economic historian, I would have preferred a still broader conception of culture—one that included *agricultural* practices and business *cultures*—but Thornton already had much on his plate and his study, as suggested above, is already plenty long as it is. In the last chapter

in this section, "The Revolutionary Moment in the Atlantic," he offers a solid, but more or less standard discussion of the ways in which the colonies in the Americas achieved independence in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. With the close of this chapter, Thornton's book, perhaps out of authorial exhaustion, just stops, ending, as T.S. Eliot might have put it, not with a bang but a whimper.

Thornton, an intellectual denizen of the Black Atlantic, shares with Kupperman of the White Atlantic the belief that during the period in which the various peoples of the Atlantic basin encountered one another they were more similar than different in terms of power, technology (military and otherwise), material living standards, etc. In both cases such claims are asserted rather than argued rigorously, for neither author pays sustained, let alone systematic attention to matters economic or technological. If they had, they would have found, I suspect, that, contrary to their claims (or assumptions), the more economically advanced parts of Europe, like the more economically advanced parts of Asia (the Yangzi delta and parts of India), differed in significant ways from societies in West Africa and the Americas, with most, but not all of the differences (including differences in economic ideologies) leading to asymmetries in the power Europeans and Euro-Americans were able (and willing) to bring to bear in their dealings with Africans and Native Americans.

For starters: Angus Maddison's estimates of GDP per capita—the best we have—demonstrate convincingly that in 1500 the levels in Western Europe were already far higher than in Africa or America, with the gap widening much further by 1820 (Maddison 2007:70–71). This is not to say that the significant advantages Western Europeans (and thence, Euro-Americans) possessed in terms of GDP per capita meant they enjoyed a total monopoly on power in said dealings nor that they did what they would, only that it is naïve and somewhat tendentious to proceed as though the relationship between and among the emerging nation-states of northwest Europe, the Kingdom of Kongo and the Powhatan Confederacy, for example, should be seen as akin to mathematical identities.

This problem, I hasten to add, is hardly unique to Thornton and Kupperman. It is, in fact, largely generational, a part of the reaction, indeed overreaction of a generation or two of scholars to earlier overly Eurocentric approaches and perspectives. To grant greater narrative agency to Africans and Native Americans is one thing; to do so by neglecting or downplaying the economic/technological sinews of European/Euro-American power another. Luckily for us, this problem results in minimal—not even collateral—damage in these two studies. Very different in scale and scope, both of these books make estimable contributions to the field of Atlantic history, even if neither is concerned very much with the

manner in which power was wielded in the Atlantic world or how the Atlantic economy worked.

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Empire and Elites

Opposing Views of Haiti in the Twenty-first Century

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The Political Economy of Disaster: Destitution, Plunder and Earthquake in Haiti. Mats Lundahl. London: Routledge, 2013. xxiv + 440 pp. (Cloth US\$130.00)

Haiti's New Dictatorship: The Coup, the Earthquake and the UN Occupation. Justin Podur. London: Pluto, 2012. x + 192 pp. (Paper US\$29.00)

Writing in the aftermath of the earthquake that devastated Haiti in January 2010, Mats Lundahl and Justin Podur attempt to account for the country's inability to extricate itself from what appears to be a series of deep-seated and unending crises. In *The Political Economy of Disaster*, Lundahl, a Swedish economist and leading scholar on Haiti, offers an institutional approach to understand the historical roots of the country's woes. He proposes a neo-liberal process of industrialization as the only viable alternative lest the island descend into further poverty and underdevelopment. By contrast, in *Haiti's New Dictatorship*, Podur contends that Haiti was on its way to a democratic and progressive transformation under the presidency of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, but that a constellation of domestic elites and foreign powers came together in 2004 to overthrow him, abort this popular transformation, and install a new authoritarian regime.

Lundahl and Podur cover similar historical terrain; they both examine Haiti's recent past from the fall of the Duvalier dictatorship in 1986 to the present. They pay special attention to the 2000 Aristide regime, its collapse and its political consequences, and they also concentrate on the devastating effects of a series of natural disasters culminating in the earthquake of 2010. Moreover, *The Political Economy of Disaster* and *Haiti's New Dictatorship* share some basic assumptions. Both contend that the Haitian political elite has predatory instincts and has governed in a thoroughly "extractive" mode; both emphasize the country's dependence on outside financial forces, and both regard the recent election of

Michel Martelly as a complete “farce.” They depict President Martelly as having received only a minute portion of the eligible vote and as lacking any serious preparation for assuming his new office. Both have a rather pessimistic vision of Haiti’s future though the reasons for their pessimism are quite distinct. Lundahl sees the weight of the country’s unbroken predatory history as a major obstacle to any significant transformation: change that will “take time—if it ever comes” (p. 349). Podur on the other hand contends that the “new dictatorship” imposed on Haitians by imperial forces is the primary impediment to any local progressive movement. Not surprisingly, their analytical framework, and the solutions they propose to move the country toward a new, inclusive, and more prosperous direction, differ markedly.

The modern Haitian problem, in Podur’s eyes, is to a large extent the product of the 2004 foreign-engineered coup that ended Aristide’s democratic regime and violently repressed its popular movement, *Lavalas*. Alien forces—first American and French troops, and then United Nations forces (MINUSTAH)—occupied the country and established what Podur calls “Haiti’s new dictatorship.” This dictatorship was “imposed from the outside, and is maintained from the outside” (p. 158). Imperial powers led by the United States, France, and Canada, and ultimately supported by progressive Latin American governments like Brazil and Chile, have occupied the country and robbed Haitians of their rights and sovereignty. This foreign coalition was legitimized by a dominant narrative in the mainstream media of North America which presented “a story of Haiti’s President Jean-Bertrand Aristide getting elected, becoming a dictator, and leaving in the face of a popular uprising” (p. 3). According to Podur (p. 40), however, there are in fact two contending versions of Haiti’s politics in the early twentieth century.

One is a story of a leader becoming a dictator and getting overthrown, leaving a basket-case country in a basket-case condition. The second is the story of a popular movement being thwarted in its struggle for democracy and development and ending with a new dictatorship imposed upon it ... I believe the second story is the truer one.

For Podur, Aristide was actually deposed because he embodied a “popular movement struggling against foreign-imposed constraints on Haiti’s sovereignty” (p. 31). Instead of being a despot, Aristide was in fact a democrat enjoying overwhelming popular support.

Because of his dichotomous model, Podur fails to conceive of a third possible narrative that would be deeply critical of Aristide’s governance and yet neither call for, nor approve of his forced removal from office. Podur’s objective, how-

ever, is to establish that whatever the shortcomings of Aristide may have been, the regimes that followed him, particularly the 2004–2006 interim government of Prime Minister Gérard Latortue, were “far worse” (p. 4). The coup that overthrew Aristide—what Podur calls Aristide’s “kidnapping” by American special forces—was, in his words, nothing but “a delivery into tyranny” (p. 5).

There is little doubt that when elected in 2000, Aristide was Haiti’s most popular politician and that despite committing significant human rights violations (Dupuy 2007), his government was not as repressive as the one that followed it. Podur is also right in emphasizing that Aristide was constrained by a powerful constellation of local and international forces. The Haitian elite supported by the United States, France, and Canada had a visceral dislike for Aristide; they were bent on destabilizing or overthrowing him. Moreover, Aristide’s forced departure seriously damaged the fragile transition to more accountable political structures that were beginning to appear.

This is not to say that the Aristide administration was actively transforming Haiti or laying firm foundations for solid democratic institutions, let alone resisting neoliberal policies and fighting for greater national sovereignty. While Aristide was not the despot that his enemies on the right depict, he had clear messianic and authoritarian tendencies (Dupuy 2007). He continuously identified his persona with the people as if the two were identical. He never established a democratic political structure for his party, *Fanmi Lavalas*. Aristide’s populist rhetoric emphasized political “movement” under his sole leadership, rather than the development of long-lasting and structured institutions. Not surprisingly, the Haitian state under Aristide was a hollow shell; while this condition was not all his responsibility, he contributed little to make it otherwise. In fact, his fall was symptomatic of his incapacity to unleash state power to stop the advances of a small band of badly trained and unpopular paramilitary thugs.

In spite of his nationalistic and anti-imperialist rhetoric, Aristide’s own security forces were supplied by the Steele Foundation which was in turn composed of American special forces and “was led by someone who came from the Pentagon’s Office of Intelligence” (p. 54), as Podur acknowledges. Podur strangely blames René Préval for Aristide’s decision to keep the Steele Foundation as his security detail, as though Aristide had no alternative but to maintain the same security retinue his predecessor had hired in 1995 (p. 54). Similarly, Aristide’s economic policies had little to do with his anticapitalist rhetoric; they were firmly implanted in the neoliberal terrain. While the global economy imposed major constraints on Aristide’s choices, he did little to offer an alternative to the so-called “Washington consensus.” In fact, as Podur points out, Aristide’s 1994 return to power on the back of 20,000 marines, had “nothing to do with Clin-

ton administration 'good will' but rather with his agreement to institute a raft of brutal neoliberal structural adjustment 'reforms'" (p. 51). In his second term as president, Aristide persisted on this trajectory and embraced the establishment of free-trade zones to take advantage of Haiti's ultra cheaplabor. It is true that he supported increasing the minimum wage of Haitian workers despite the opposition of both the business and international communities, but the "fundamentals" of neoliberalism were never actually challenged.

Podur therefore offers an incomplete picture of the Haitian predicament. He is on very firm grounds in his depiction of Haiti's loss of its sovereignty and his analysis of the deleterious consequences of continuous imperial interferences and machinations. He is also right in pointing out that contemporary Haiti "has a special governance structure, in which many of the functions that are normally performed by government are done by nongovernmental organizations" (p. 38). But he is on shakier grounds in his contention that Aristide represented a fundamental rupture with Haiti's authoritarian zero-sum politics. While his election to the presidency in 1990 held the promise of such a rupture, the violent coup of September 1991 that overthrew him and decapitated the *Lavalas* movement generated a series of political transformations that ended the dreams of a new Haiti. The modes of Aristide's return to power in 1994 emasculated any serious economic reforms and contributed to the revival of the politics of the belly, which overwhelmed his second presidential term. In addition, *Lavalas* fragmented as many of its major intellectual and political figures defected from Aristide. While Podur acknowledges these defections, he dismisses them as having simply succumbed to the wrong narrative of Haiti's most recent history.

The problem with Podur's interpretation is that he ignores certain realities of *Lavalas*'s rule, particularly during Aristide's second term in office. *Lavalas*, as I have argued elsewhere, had "increasingly evolved into an unsteady and divided 'accumulation alliance,' as its claims on state revenues could no longer satisfy all its constituent parts" (Fatton 2002:151). Moreover, the imperial powers' drastic cut in assistance exacerbated *Lavalas*'s prebendal crisis, emboldened Aristide's foes, and destabilized the political system. Lacking prebendal resources, Aristide could no longer "oil" the alliance. His erstwhile supporters and his domestic and foreign opponents seized the opportunity to form a coalition that ultimately forced his departure. In fact, it was a revolt of his own *chimè* (armed gangs), the "Cannibal Army" in Gonaïves, that began the paramilitary offensive against Aristide. Aristide's rule thus faced its own internecine demons, a determined and armed opposition and an array of imperial machinations. The confluence of these factors left him with no option but succumbing to a forced exile.

Mats Lundahl tends to agree with this account of Aristide's fall. Moreover, he depicts the *Lavalas* leader as "simply one more link in the chain of kleptocrats who had ruled Haiti since 1804. His interests had nothing to do with those of the Haitian masses" (p. 92). Unlike Podur, Lundahl sees little difference between Aristide's government and those that preceded and followed it. They were all predatory and authoritarian even if a few never degenerated into brutal dictatorships. They were all exclusionary, bent on monopolizing power and silencing the opposition.

From Lundahl's perspective, the Haitian problem has been the historically persistent presence of "extractive" rather than "inclusive" economic institutions. While the latter establish the rule of law, protect property and contract, and generate open, competitive, and efficient markets, the former extract resources from the population, undermine economic activities, and promote the exclusive interests of rulers and their cronies (pp. 321–22). Moreover, Lundahl contends that while economic institutions "determine whether a country is prosperous or poor, it is the political institutions that determine which type of economic institutions a country has" (p. 322). Not surprisingly, extractive societies like Haiti that have noninclusive patterns of governance are condemned to a vicious cycle of continued depredation and underdevelopment. In this political environment, according to Lundahl, "ruling groups or elites come and go, but the system as such reproduces itself. All contenders for power are in the game for the same purpose, and whatever change takes place is a change in name only" (p. 324).

In Lundahl's view, Haiti is stuck in a systemic crisis after enduring a series of "critical junctures," ranging from natural catastrophes to major world events, which have failed to engender any positive economic transformation (pp. 333–341). The question then is what event or institutional change could set the country on a virtuous cycle. He argues that this would require the application of the impersonal and unbiased rule of law, which is indispensable to foment economic growth and inclusive institutions. Lundahl, recognizes, however, that in Haiti's "specific historical circumstances," the legacy of unbroken "extractive and kleptocratic institutions" weighs heavily against such an outcome.

This is not to say that everything is bleak. In fact, Lundahl argues forcefully that the country can find a way out of its predicament by adopting a neoliberal mode of industrialization. More specifically, he contends that Haiti has to submit to the discipline of world market prices and take advantage of its cheap labor to engage in production for export, which at this time implies the apparel industry. Lundahl views this strategy as the only viable option (pp. xxiv, 284, 341). He rejects as "utopian" (p. 283) any plan that would privilege the development of agriculture and food sovereignty. As he explains on p. 341,

making agricultural production for the domestic market behind protective tariff walls the first economic priority, will not only lead to inefficient high-cost production at the expense of consumers, but also to political rent creation and revenue seeking. The tariff revenue obtained will quite probably be extracted by corrupt future governments and their cronies. Institutions will become, more, not less, extractive, and so will, presumably, the political institutions of Haiti.

According to Lundahl, prioritizing agriculture not only leads to poor economic outcomes, but is also impractical given extreme soil erosion, high man-land ratio, and the lack of an effective titling system. He approvingly quotes Uli Locher who bluntly asserted in his study of land distribution, tenure, and erosion that “rural Haiti as we know it is doomed” (p. 277). In addition, Lundahl (p. 277) contends that feeding Haitians through Haitian agriculture is not feasible:

Increasing food production simply contributes to soil destruction, to “mining” the soil ... An increasing agricultural population means more food crops at the expense of perennial tree crops which bind the soil on the mountainsides. For the process to be reversed, the man-land ratio must decrease, not increase.

Not surprisingly, Lundahl argues that reducing the rural population can only be achieved by creating employment “elsewhere, in the context of an open economy, and then there is only one viable alternative: the manufacturing sector, apparel production, where Haiti has a comparative advantage in terms of wages and privileged access to the American market” (p. xxiv).

The problem with Lundahl's argument is that the strategy he espouses was adopted by Jean-Claude Duvalier's dictatorship in the mid-1970s and early 1980s to create the so-called “Taiwan of the Caribbean.” Instead, it had devastating consequences. It failed to industrialize the nation and led to massive corruption, utter neglect of agriculture, and the creation of vast slums in the vicinity of the so-called industrial zones. Lundahl offers no reason to believe that following the same path in the current conjuncture would lead to a different outcome. In fact, while he applauds the recently inaugurated free trade area of Caracol in the northeast of Haiti, he acknowledges that things could go very wrong. “Unless social services, housing, urbanized villages, etc. are prepared what you will get is simply a new Cité Soleil or Martissant, with an impatient and disorderly labor pool” (p. 292).

It is hard to believe that the neoliberal industrialization Lundahl advocates is more realistic than prioritizing the development of agriculture. While he is

correct in contending that privileging the existing structures of rural production, or a return to some idyllic nineteenth-century *Lakou* agriculture, would lead to an impasse, there is no convincing reason to assume that the modernization of the countryside need be naively utopian. In fact, the launching of a coherent agrarian reform, a transition to higher tariff, and a public plan of reforestation would do more to employ, feed, and equalize life chances of Haitians than any neoliberal industrialization based on cheap labor and uncertain foreign demands for apparel. On the contrary, what is utopian is to believe that after prioritizing the apparel industry for more than three decades, it can now miraculously generate the virtuous cycle of development, which it has consistently failed to deliver.

Haiti's problem is not merely its predatory elite and zero-sum politics. Its problem is also the neoliberal orthodoxy imposed on the nation's fragile structure of production by an array of imperial nations and organizations. To that extent, *The Political Economy of Disaster* and *Haiti's New Dictatorship* complement each other. The former offers a comprehensive understanding of the internal dynamics of Haitian politics and its persistent institutional failures, while the latter explores the depth of the country's dependence and indeed its virtual loss of sovereignty. Whatever shortcomings these books may have, both are important contributions to our understanding of contemporary Haiti. While Lundahl offers the best available institutionalist and neoliberal analysis of the country's political economy, Podur advances a cogent articulation of the havoc created by continuous imperial interventions in the domestic affairs of the island. These two books should interest anyone looking for insights into Haitian complexities in the aftermath of the earthquake of 2010. They offer contrasting understandings of the country's ills and open the door to fruitful debates and research.

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Book Reviews



Rebecca J. Scott & Jean M. Hébrard

Freedom Papers: An Atlantic Odyssey in the Age of Emancipation. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2012. 259 pp. (Cloth US\$35.00)

A letter written in 1899 by a Belgian cigar merchant, Édouard Tinchant, is the starting point for this family saga. Written to a revered Cuban war hero, it expressed support for the cause of independence and asked permission to use his portrait for a brand of cigar. A marketing ploy, the aim was to add prestige to an everyday product. Linking Belgian cigars to the cause of Cuban independence, Tinchant couched his request in ways that might appeal. He mentioned that his family was of Haitian descent. He claimed that his father and mother had been born in Gonaïves, the birthplace of Haitian independence. This assertion was dramatic license, because the father's birthplace was almost certainly Baltimore, and the mother was from the southern, not western, province of Saint-Domingue. Still, the connection to Haiti was true enough. Furthermore, Tinchant's claim that his parents had settled in New Orleans after the Haitian Revolution and then left for France to raise six sons (actually five) in relative freedom was also correct. Tinchant also referred to his military and political service during and after the American Civil War, when he was a member of a free colored unit of the Union Army and a representative at the Louisiana convention that drafted a radical state constitution. Tracing this family story, connecting small family details to a larger political narrative, a "microhistory set in motion" (p. 4), is the purpose of this book, which the authors from opposite sides of the Atlantic—one from the University of Michigan and the other at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris—have written together.

The tale begins with Édouard Tinchant's grandmother, an African woman, likely a speaker of the Pulaar language from Senegambia. Born about 1767, she crossed the Atlantic as an enslaved captive, perhaps about twenty years of age. In the late 1780s, she arrived in Saint-Domingue, the most dynamic plantation colony of its time, where she became known as Rosalie. She ended

up in the southern province of the colony, where coffee production was on the rise. Owned by a succession of free blacks, she became the partner of a poor white colonist, Michel Vincent, with whom she had at least four children. In the often frightening wartime confusion of the Haitian Revolution, she and her children gained their freedom. In 1803 Vincent, Rosalie, and their youngest child, Élisabeth, escaped to Cuba. He promptly died, and six years later his widow had a choice to make when Spanish authorities on the island expelled the French. At some point, she went back to Haiti, but Élisabeth accompanied her godmother, another widow and woman of color, to Louisiana.

The story then turns to the second generation, focusing on Élisabeth. In New Orleans in 1822 she married Jacques Tinchant, a carpenter and another free person of color, born in Baltimore, also to Saint-Domingue refugees. They had six children. The first and second generations seem to have reconnected in 1835 when Rosalie Vincent (then a venerable sixty-eight years of age) apparently arrived in New Orleans from Port-au-Prince with a copy of Élisabeth's baptismal record of 1799, proving that she was a Vincent. In 1840 the Tinchant family—Jacques, Élisabeth, and all but the eldest of their then five children—decided to forsake New Orleans for France, in part because of growing restrictions on free people of color and also because of French educational opportunities. They bought a farm not far from Jacques's mother.

Finally, the third generation—Jacques and Elizabeth's children—come into view. By the 1850s the two eldest sons were cigar makers in New Orleans. In the late 1850s they established a base in Antwerp and a little later two younger brothers expanded the operations to Mexico. In 1862 Édouard, the youngest son, the only one born in France, and later a letter-writer to the Cuban general, arrived in New Orleans, and soon followed in the footsteps of his elder brother Joseph in mobilizing support for the Union. He was a member of the Sixth Louisiana Volunteers and later served in the body that drafted a constitution with which Louisiana could reenter the Union. By the late nineteenth century, a number of the Tinchant brothers were successful tobacco manufacturers in Antwerp, when Édouard crafted his letter.

The family story could have ended there, but Scott and Hébrard add a fifth-generation coda. A great-great-granddaughter of Rosalie, Marie-José Tinchant, the daughter of a prosperous cigar merchant of Antwerp, married controversially in England in 1937; the groom's parents raised objections because she was colored. She later fought for the Belgian resistance against the Nazis and was gassed at Ravensbrück concentration camp, in part, it would seem, because of her color.

Scott and Hébrard have engaged in meticulous research and constructed a riveting narrative. Access to documents—freedom papers—was critical to the

Tinchant family, and of course vital to the historians trying to recover the whole story. Whether Rosalie had much experience of written texts in her homeland has to remain a mystery. No doubt she knew the power of talismans, but whether this knowledge set her and her descendants on the path of attaching value to words on paper is unclear. Nevertheless, those same documents, in the hands of gifted historians, permit a superb reconstruction of the web of mercantile connections woven by the Tinchants during their Atlantic travels. The family “emerges as one with a tenacious commitment to claiming dignity and respect” (p. 3), but also one keen to seize the commercial main chance. Quite what this microhistory reveals of larger events—the Haitian Revolution, the French Revolution of 1848, the American Civil War and Reconstruction, and the Cuban War of Independence—is the one unresolved question posed by this fascinating book.

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J.D. La Fleur

Fusion Foodways of Africa's Gold Coast in the Atlantic Era. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill, 2012. xvi + 214 pp. (Cloth US\$146.00)

This is a stimulating and informative book that engages its subject in a *longue durée* framework. J.D. La Fleur offers an informed and detailed cultural, social, and technical account of agriculture, food, and culinary culture in the Gold Coast region from prehistoric foraging to mature farming. The focus, however, is on the era of the “Columbian exchange,” involving the movement of people, plants, animals, disease, and ideas in the Atlantic Basin between 1500 and 1850 CE and the impact of Atlantic crops on established agricultural technologies and culinary cultures. The book has six chapters, a comprehensive bibliography, and an index divided into three useful subsections. In addition, there are nine instructive maps, five illustrations, and word lists of crops, beverages, and processed foods in different Gold Coast languages. It draws on archival sources in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, published primary and secondary sources, and unpublished works comprising theses, dissertations, and conference papers. Interdisciplinary in its methodological approach, it relies on data from archaeology, ethnology, comparative and historical linguistics, historical demography, historical geography, and historical ecology.

Chapter 1 (“Finding History in Early Afro-Atlantic Foodways”) offers a critical examination of current historiographical studies of precolonial agriculture in Africa and introduces an alternative approach to this field. The themes include the technical and ideological processes associated with the incorporation of Atlantic crops into Gold Coast agricultural regimes, the cultural and social implications of new food technologies, and the effects of changing food technologies on local ecosystems.

Chapter 2 (“Introducing the Land to Culture: An Interpretation”) is partly a speculative history due to limited data. It proposes possible food procuring strategies in the region from before 25,000 BCE up to the second millennium CE. According to La Fleur, by about 1400 CE a common agricultural strategy existed throughout the Gold Coast and complementing this farming tradition were specialized communities engaged in hunting, fishing, collecting, and trapping.

Chapter 3 (“Seeds of Change: Early African Experimentation with Foreign Starches”) discusses the impact of foreign starches on cuisine and local farming strategies. Starch foods included maize from the Americas, plantain from Central Africa, and Asian varieties of rice. Women farmers, living in the vicinity of Portuguese commercial stations, began the initial cultivation of these crops in their kitchen gardens toward the end of the fifteenth century. Analyzing early word lists of Gold Coast languages for neologisms and European loan words,

La Fleur traces the spread and adoption of these crops and their associated farming techniques. By the middle of the sixteenth century maize was an established crop in the savanna-woodlands north of the rain forest and by the end of the century plantain was a staple in forest agriculture. In 1600 Asian and not African rice was being sold in coastal markets. As described by La Fleur, the sixteenth century was a time of widespread experimentation as local farmers added new starchy foods to their subsistence strategies.

Chapter 4 (“You Reap What You Sow: The Profits and Perils of the New Starchy Staples”) covers the period from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. La Fleur discusses the advantages plantain culture had over yam culture, arguing for example that plantain cultivation “freed up time that elders and ‘big men’ could direct toward the extraction of gold” (p. 109). The chapter describes how Atlantic-era breads and beer became part of the culinary repertoire of coastal towns in the course of the seventeenth century and indicates how this was achieved through the agency of Allada cooks employed in European trading stations. From the sixteenth century onward, maize production was promoted by coastal kings, big men, and independent entrepreneurs to cater to European factors’ need for provisions, and by the seventeenth century maize consumption was regarded as a symbol of wealth and high status. The chapter ends with a lengthy discussion of the unforeseen consequences deriving from new food technologies, such as poverty, malnutrition, disease, and violence.

Chapter 5 (“The Porcupine’s Shame: Bearing the Burden of Cassava Culture”) reveals that the adoption of cassava as a staple crop was achieved only in the mid-nineteenth century, following the arrival of diasporic Africans from the Americas. Prior to the mid-nineteenth century cassava cultivation was largely limited to small plots in and around Accra. Chapter 6 (“Finding Food in Afro-Atlantic History”) proposes new ways to introduce a more visible African dimension in Atlantic history, for example by emphasizing the role of women who, in La Fleur’s view, served as “gatekeepers to the introduction of new crops into domestic gardens and then into their kitchens” (p. 189).

There are a couple of critical points to be made. La Fleur does not refer to the “country wives” of European traders in Gold Coast ports; given the culinary nature of their households that would have catered to African and European diets, these women would have been instrumental in the introduction of new crops. Nor does he discuss the role of towns and urbanization in changing food technologies and dietary habits over the long duration. What were the dietary needs and culinary demands of townspeople? However, these are minor issues and should not detract from the fact that this is an excellent book.

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Jerome S. Handler & Kenneth M. Bilby

Enacting Power: The Criminalization of Obeah in the Anglophone Caribbean, 1760–2011. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2013. xiii + 172 pp. (Paper US\$ 25.00)

Obeah is an integral aspect of a complex belief system that was taken to the Caribbean by enslaved Africans and then creolized. Part of what looked to slaveholders like a “dark” and sinister body of beliefs and practices, it was vilified and eventually outlawed in the British colonies, albeit surprisingly late in the era of slavery (1760 onward), and has remained so to this day except in just four islands. In less than 200 pages, Jerome Handler and Kenneth Bilby examine the obeah laws of the entire Commonwealth Caribbean comparatively from their inception, presenting readers with a comprehensive analysis of the thinking behind the enactment of the laws in the first place and their perpetuation into the postcolonial era.

The broad arguments of *Enacting Power* are straightforward. Partially out of fear of the ability of obeah practitioners to empower the enslaved people to resist slavery, and as part of a broader strategy to try to exercise hegemonic control over them, slaveholders regarded obeah as witchcraft and sorcery and criminalized it. When slavery ended, legislation outlawing obeah was embodied in new vagrancy laws patterned on an 1824 English act and, after mid-century, also in new obeah laws that have remained on the statute books with very minimal alteration since the late nineteenth century. Strikingly, none of these laws clearly defined obeah or (except in isolated instances) identified the instruments obeah practitioners allegedly used. This gave those in charge of the police and judicial systems enormous oppressive power to label as obeah any practice they did not understand but nevertheless considered suspicious and subversive, and to prosecute, execute, and transport the “offenders” during slavery, or to fine, jail, and flog them after slavery ended.

Handler and Bilby show a clear consistency in the obeah legislation throughout the region, including the language, which demonstrates extensive borrowing to deal with common sociocultural concerns of a white minority who held power at least until the 1940s. They discuss the evolution of the anti-obeah laws in *all* of the former British Caribbean colonies and assert that these laws were in large part designed to stigmatize and devalue the broad mosaic of Afro-creole culture, and to construct and maintain a hierarchy that placed the Euro-oriented culture of the white elites at its apex. That the laws still remain in force in most territories, even after political independence, is testimony to the persistence of the cultural ideas and attitudes of the old white merchant-planter aristocracy amidst the new middle and upper classes,

many of whom ironically have their roots in the formerly enslaved populations.

Because the draconian laws literally drove obeah underground, and lawmakers and enforcers on one hand, and practitioners and their mainly lower-class clients on the other, had vastly different perceptions of it, Handler and Bilby acknowledge that it remains unclear what obeah really is. However, they argue cogently that it was certainly not the evil, harmful practice of witchcraft and sorcery portrayed by elite legislators and contemporary writers; rather, it was primarily a benign system of spiritual healing for individual and social good, “bringing good fortune, diagnosing illness and healing, finding lost or stolen goods, protecting from harm” (p. 5). It was elite writings and pronouncements that transformed fantasies of obeah as an evil into legislated “reality.”

Nor, Handler and Bilby assert, was there in the case of Jamaica any opposition between obeah (evil) and myal (good). This too, they argue, reflected the ignorance of missionary and other elite commentators who misunderstood what they may have observed or heard and interpreted it in a narrow ethnocentric manner. The misunderstandings were given intellectual credibility by American anthropologist Joseph J. Williams who “established” the roots of the dichotomy in the Asante *Obayifo* (“evil witchdoctor”) and *Okomfo* (“good priest”). Handler and Bilby, however, maintain that “obeah and myal were never inherently opposed; rather, they have long formed complementary parts ... of a single Afro-Creole cultural system in Jamaica” (p. 11).

Although they argue that the laws played a critical role in shaping negative attitudes to obeah in the Caribbean, Handler and Bilby reserve some of their most stringent criticisms for scholars whose work they believe has helped to perpetuate biases against obeah. They contend that by relying excessively on written sources and accepting obeah as just sorcery, witchcraft, and fraud, much modern scholarship has reinforced the negative imaging of obeah and thus validated those images with the authoritative stamp of the academy. They hold strongly to the view that the best way to counteract this sort of scholarly bias is through detailed ethnographic field work. Such research would probably provide more valuable data on what exactly constitutes obeah, and on the associated beliefs and practices, through the eyes of obeah practitioners themselves.

Handler and Bilby have accomplished their ambitious project with great success and clarity. They have filled a major lacuna in the scholarship of obeah, although by their own admission more research still needs to be done to achieve a fuller understanding of this belief system and its associated practices. Their comparative regional approach and historical analysis of the obeah

legislation of each jurisdiction have paved the way for future scholars to delve deeper into this field of enquiry. *Enacting Power* achieves what it sets out to do and adds significantly to the growing body of historical scholarship on Caribbean culture.

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Brett Rushforth

Bonds of Alliance: Indigenous and Atlantic Slaveries in New France. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. (Cloth US\$39.95)

This superbly researched work sets a new standard for scholarship on Indian slavery in the French colonial world. The main focus is on one corner of the French empire, Canada—more precisely on the Pays d'en haut (Great Lakes and Upper Mississippi). By drawing on many sources (state correspondence, notarial, judicial, and church documentation, French-Indian dictionaries), Brett Rushforth highlights Indian slavery in new ways, addressing an aspect of French colonialism that has usually been neglected by historians of New France. In reconstructing indigenous and colonial forms of slavery, he combines ethnohistory (new Indian history) with both Atlantic history and Imperial history. Legal pluralism, he argues, was a characteristic of French Atlantic colonialism, and Indian slavery in the Pays d'en haut was the product of two traditions—one indigenous, one Atlantic.

The first chapter offers an excellent discussion of Central Algonquians and Siouan peoples' practices of enslavement. It is judiciously based on the use of Jesuit dictionaries which compiled and translated thousands of pages of Algonquian phrases. In Indian societies, slavery was conceptualized through metaphors of domestication and mastery, as enemy captives were reduced to the status of dogs and other domesticated animals. The Algonquian term *awakan*, for example, means "captive," "dog," or "animals kept as pets" (p. 35). (Some anthropologists have argued that the analogy between taming and adoption was widespread in the Americas.) Rushforth shows that unlike the slave system that was expanding in the Atlantic world, slave labor in the Pays d'en haut was "not central to the economic and social organization" (p. 65). Indigenous slaves tended to be assimilated and did not pass their status on to the next generation. I would add that the French term *esclave* sometimes referred to captives in a very neutral sense: French colonists would even write of *esclaves* that were *adoptés*.

In a brilliant exercise of transatlantic history (Chapter 2), Rushforth then studies the Atlantic background of New France slavery, especially the tension between the legal principle of French free soil and the demand for enslaved laborers in the colonies. He analyzes the discussions in seventeenth-century France about the morality and legality of slavery, and stresses the fact that the French made a subtle distinction between enslavement and slavery. In French thinking, the enslavement of Africans was justified by the Law of Just War, as the French traded with "black Kings" who sold their war captives in accordance with the Law of Nations. Rushforth argues that "Nigritie" (the vague

and vast interior of Africa) functioned in the French geographic imagination as a resource-base for slaves. He then moves on to study Indian slavery in the Caribbean, where the French acted more as protectors than predators of the Indians, in contrast to the Spanish mode of colonization.

Chapter 3 brings us back to Canada, analyzing the Raudot ordinance of 1709, which confirmed the legality of *Pani* (a synonym for Indian slave) as well as African slavery. At the end of the seventeenth century, French colonists in Saint Lawrence imagined fitting slavery into a Caribbean-African mold: Indian slaves were “Like Negroes in the Islands” in that they were legally enslaved (according to the Law of Nations) and were supposed to supplement the labor force. (Indian slaves of Montreal, Québec and the western posts worked mostly as domestic and farm laborers, or in the fur trade.) Chapter 4 argues that New France’s slavery was a product of both war and alliance, as captured enemies could be offered as gifts. After 1712 (at the beginning of the Fox Wars), one of the characteristics of the French empire and continental expansion was the centrality of slavery. Thus, Rushforth offers a new reading of the Fox Wars, by concentrating on the enslavement issue. Thanks to the use of notarial, parish, and judicial records, he reconstructs the importance of Fox slaves in Saint-Lawrence society.

Chapter 5, which concentrates on the status of slave women in New France’s western posts, addresses the question of sexual violence by fur traders, as well as the possibility for slave women to be fully accepted into French colonial society. The final chapter studies the specificity of Indian slavery in Canada during the eighteenth century, particularly in Montreal. According to Rushforth, it was a “thing of its own,” and not “an incomplete or failed version of French slavery in the Caribbean” (p. 300). By focusing on the itineraries of particular individuals, he shows how much slaves’ legal standing remained uncertain in the context of the geopolitical importance of French-Indian alliances. The difficulty of clearly distinguishing between allies and enemies (or potential slaves) was in tension with the process of racializing the Indians. Thus, the book shows that alliance building in New France created a singular, non-racialized, slave system.

Minor problems. In Chapter 1, the overall argument—the link between war and enslavement—is undermined by Rushforth’s insistence that “the raids [were] designed to weaken a threatening enemy” (p. 37). Also, he seems to establish an uncertain link between war and territoriality (pp. 17, 24) though he later admits that “territorial conquest was extremely rare” (p. 39). And the proposed dichotomy between one period of “relative balance [between trade and war] for at least two centuries prior to French arrival” and another (the eighteenth century) characterized by “chaos” is questionable. The level of violence before European colonization might not have been as low as Rushforth

suggests (pp. 244, 247). Besides, reference to “métis communities” (p. 285) in the Great Lakes during the eighteenth century should have been substantiated. Finally, Rushforth’s discussion of Indian and particularly Illinois populations (p. 246, see especially note 89) makes no reference to Joseph Zitomersky’s 1994 book, *French Americans-Native Americans in Eighteenth-Century French Colonial Louisiana. The Population Geography of the Illinois Indians, 1670–1760*. But none of these remarks alter the overall excellence of this very stimulating book.

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Sara E. Johnson

The Fear of French Negroes: Transcolonial Collaboration in the Revolutionary Americas. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012. xxii + 289 pp. (Paper US\$ 49.95)

The Fear of French Negroes represents an historical analysis and literary criticism of the various experiences of French colonists of African descent in the Americas in the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution. Sara Johnson charts her course creatively at the outset. By turning the oft-mentioned phrase “fear of French negroes” on its head, she sets out to, among other things, discover African-descended French colonists’ fears—as opposed to European-descended peoples’ fears of black refugees from the French colonies—on their journeys throughout the Americas in the Age of Revolution. The result is an at times complicated series of essays exploring how “transcolonial collaborations offered black actors unique opportunities to negotiate mobility, liberty, and self-expression from within a hemispheric system of chattel slavery” (p. xxii).

The first chapter is the most deeply rooted in contemporary sources, and the most edifying. Drawing on a well-known article published in *American Quarterly*, it looks at the disturbing practice in American slave societies of training and employing dogs to track fugitive slaves. In Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica, and eventually the antebellum South, slaveowners and their allies reserved the gruesome practice for absconded slaves. In a truly remarkable demonstration of transcolonial solidarity, French, Spanish, British, and southern U.S. slaveowners and collaborators trained dogs not only to capture but also to mutilate and maim their human prey. The result was an international system of racially inspired and state-sanctioned torture that because of its widespread use during the Haitian Revolution gives new meaning to the common expression, the “horrors of St. Domingo.”

The second chapter moves in an entirely different direction by studying the iconography of black Haitians in the Dominican Republic, the most central being Domingo Echavarría’s engraving of a sandaled and pipe-smoking Haitian military general. According to Johnson, who negotiates French, English, and Spanish sources effortlessly, black Haitians in the Spanish imagination often became, in spite of their military and physical prowess, racial caricatures, “unshod savages dressed up for play” (p. 75). A comparison of Echavarría’s engraving with a 1950s-era painting of a similar subject attempts to demonstrate the transcolonial reach of Haitian Vodou across the centuries, though the sparse evidence will leave historians unconvinced.

The following chapter turns to the unrelated subject of slavery and privateering on the Gulf of Mexico. The focus is on free French men of color who

participated in the transatlantic slave trade along the North American Gulf Coast and in particular Louisiana. There is little new here for those familiar with the exploits of Joseph Savary and other black contemporaries of the famous Laffite brothers. Even Johnson admits that a dearth of contemporary historical evidence makes drawing any conclusions difficult. That being said, all will benefit from her reminder that transcolonial interactions among African-descended people were subjugating and unequal just as often as they were liberating and egalitarian.

In the fourth chapter, Johnson focuses on a series of images of elegantly dressed French bondswomen to demonstrate how female black refugees cultivated cultural traditions throughout the Saint-Domingue diaspora. Sartorial and musical preferences, which distinguished “French set girls” (p. 126) from their British and Spanish peers, upset local elites who loathed witnessing cultural survivals from the revolutionary black republic among the large population of free and enslaved black people. Moreover, they demonstrated the ease with which black refugees from the French colonies maintained dual identities as they dispersed throughout the Americas. A concluding note on the survival of the African- and French-inspired musical form of *tumba francesa* in contemporary Cuba offers additional proof of Saint-Domingue customs permeating the West Indies across time and space.

The last chapter seeks to uncover transcolonial—or in this case transnational—collaboration in U.S., Haitian, and French black print culture in the 1830s and 1840s. Here, the evidence points to an energetic transatlantic conversation on black history, tradition, and civil rights among black intellectuals and general readers alike. Johnson shows that in the three newspapers under review, *Colored American* (United States), *Revue des Colonies* (Paris and Martinique), and *L'Union* (Haiti), black writers launched an “African diasporic literary canon, the first of its kind in the Americas” (p. 161).

It is hard in a short review to do justice to an ambitious book with such a broad reach. Rare is the academician who handles print culture, visual culture, and aural culture with such deftness. Despite a tendency to overspeculate on limited and temporally inconsistent evidence and a hesitancy to link the disparate chapters together under a unifying theme or idea more explicitly, Johnson’s study contributes directly to the study of the Haitian Revolution and the Saint-Domingue diaspora. It also adds much to the cultural studies of African-descended people in the Americas more generally.

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Wim Klooster & Gert Oostindie (eds.)

Curaçao in the Age of Revolutions, 1795–1800. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2011. x + 180 pp.
(Paper €14.90)

Readers will welcome *Curaçao in the Age of Revolutions, 1795–1800*, which analyzes a period of much importance to Curaçao. Each chapter approaches the island's major slave revolt of 1795 and related events (1795–1800) from a different perspective. The slave revolt began on the Kenepa plantation, one of the largest plantations located on the western part of the island at that time.

Editors Wim Klooster and Gert Oostindie preface the collection with an introduction that wastes no time in letting us know why they call the 1795–1800 period “the five years that rocked Curaçao.” During this tumultuous period a series of uprisings took place, produced by a combination of internal and external factors, in which both free and enslaved people participated with differing objectives.

As Oostindie acknowledges in the first chapter, the slave revolt of 1795 connects past and present and is central in the modern-day Curaçaoan discourse on nation-building. After describing earlier slave uprisings in Curaçao, he situates the 1795 revolt within the context of political developments in Europe and argues that too much emphasis has been placed on its liberating effect through what he calls “after-the-fact glorification.” To him, it is not entirely clear whether the revolt, despite its forcefulness and disruptiveness, changed Dutch perceptions of the enslaved as human beings. Contrary to Oostindie, Curaçaoan sociologist and historian A.F. (Jandie) Paula has argued that although the revolt did not lead to freedom for the slaves, the colonial government could no longer ignore their complaints and immediately enacted legal measures aimed at improving their living conditions (Paula 1974, 1976, 2012). So the slaves' struggle certainly was not in vain. The revolt also had symbolic significance in dispelling the myths that slaves were passive and submissive creatures and that slavery was a system accepted by all in society.

David Geggus's chapter extends the inquiry to slave rebellions in the Americas more generally. He argues that the Curaçaoan revolt stands out among the others because more than 1,000 slaves participated in the revolt and he points to the fact that this small island accounts for two of the eight or nine major slave rebellions in the Americas. (Geggus presumably includes the slave rebellion that took place on Curaçao's Hato plantation in 1750–1751.) He concludes that the Curaçaoan revolt of 1795 did not hasten the end of slavery, considering that slavery was not abolished in the Dutch Caribbean until 1863.

Wim Klooster posits that the French revolutionary ideas of the late eighteenth century had more impact on free people of color in the Caribbean

than on the enslaved. The latter were more influenced by persistent rumors of slave liberation elsewhere in the region and the belief that the local authorities and slave-owners were withholding freedom from them. The Curaçaoan enslaved heard about the Revolution in Saint-Domingue through free colored Curaçaoans who worked in French-Caribbean colonial ports at that time. Klooster also notes that members of Curaçao's black population were involved in slave conspiracies in places as far away as Louisiana and Cuba, as commerce and seamanship connected Curaçao to other European colonies in the Americas.

Linda Rupert's article shows that some people of African descent in Curaçao maintained a strong regional, intercolonial network through illicit trade with the South American mainland, in particular the area of Coro in present-day Venezuela. These connections also enabled enslaved persons from Curaçao to flee to this area where they were granted freedom. However, by the 1790s these fugitives came to be seen as a threat to Spanish colonial interests rather than as useful geographical pawns. Rupert's case study of José Caridad González, one of the leaders of the 1795 slave rebellion in Coro, sheds light on the way the Curaçaoan revolt of 1795 fits within this wider, regional context.

Ramón Aizpura's essay analyzes the complex, dense relationship between Venezuela and Curaçao in the period under study—a relationship that was characterized by social and political conflict within the context of the threat that Great Britain and France posed to these countries. This analysis too provides a fruitful background for understanding the 1795 revolts in both Coro and Curaçao.

Karwan Fatah-Black turns to the confrontation between the military and the urban free whites of Willemstad that occurred just before the 1795 slave revolt as well as in the year after the revolt. He elaborates on the different forms in which the Orangist (pro-Dutch), the pro-English, and the pro-French elites on the island gave expression to their respective European loyalties.

The last chapter, by Han Jordaan, takes us to the conspiracy of 1799 through which two French agents from Saint-Domingue and one French merchant resident in Curaçao attempted to overthrow the island's government and liberate the enslaved. In that period Curaçao was caught between conflicting international political and commercial interests, based on the complicated situation that emerged when French privateers seized American ships in the port of Curaçao and provoked an American naval response.

This fine collection is a valuable addition to the literature on the Revolutionary Age of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, to the literature on slave uprisings in the Americas in general, and to the specific literature on the Curaçaoan slave revolt of 1795. The essays introduce new source material

and analyze existing sources from new perspectives. Although the international approach of the volume should be applauded, it is unfortunate that the book does not include any article by an author from Curaçao. Also missing is more information and analysis from the vantage point of the enslaved, which would further deepen our understanding of this and other slave revolts and related social developments and historical processes.

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Nicholas Draper

The Price of Emancipation: Slave-ownership, Compensation and British Society at the End of Slavery. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. xiii + 401 pp. (Cloth US\$99.00)

By posing the key question of what compensation meant to absentee British slave-owners, Nicholas Draper opens an intriguing investigation into an area largely neglected by historians. The answer may have direct relevance for contemporary political, social, and economic matters. In part because the focus of research over the last few decades has shifted either to the experiences of the enslaved or toward understanding slavery through a transatlantic and global lens, historians have missed the significance of the relatively small group of slave owners examined in *The Price of Emancipation*. Draper addresses this void by breaking down his overarching question into five parts: determining the ubiquity of slave ownership in metropolitan Britain; identifying slave owners and how they came to own slaves; clarifying how slave owners represented themselves and how they were perceived by others; examining how they managed to get compensation; and lastly, analyzing how Britain incorporated slave owners into narratives of nationhood.

Answering these questions will fuel the fire of contemporary debates about the complicity of past and present financial institutions and governments. Draper's close analysis of the Slave Compensation Commerce Commission records enables historians to better conceptualize "the extent and limits of Britain's complicity in slavery" (p. 7). He argues that not only did slavery benefit British elites in multiple ways, but the Commission records make possible identification of who benefitted from slavery's end through the process of compensation. His meticulous research demonstrates the value of feeding cold hard data into the often emotionally volatile debate over reparations.

The opening chapter notes that although abolitionists deftly managed, up through the 1820s, to cast slavery as a national sin that harmed slaves, slave owners, and the country as a whole, slave owners were never completely ostracized in Britain. In part they avoided alienation by helping to fashion their own image as worthwhile members of society. Slave owners were not "systematically subject to social sanction" (p. 73), and during the apprenticeship period some abolitionists and slave owners, though by no means all, even worked together for common interests. More often, however, identities constructed during slavery defined interests during the age of emancipation and afterward, as absentee slave owners and their descendants tended to support policies that benefitted commercial interests at the expense of black laborers in the Caribbean and white workers in Britain.

Draper uses individual examples effectively to contend that most absentee slave owners had multiple identities that stemmed from their various functions in British society. This contention is also consistent with the notion of slavery as a national sin: all were responsible on some level, so even though slave owners were pilloried, they were not expelled.

This was not the only ideological battle slave owners won. Perhaps even more critical was the question of whether owning slaves could, in the age of emancipation, be considered as a legitimate form of property ownership. Slave owners employed a variety of rhetorical and legal strategies that appealed to members of the upper class with no direct ties to slavery, such as warning that not validating men as property, and therefore not compensating slave owners for emancipated property, would seriously undermine the capability of slave owners to pay creditors.

The carefully thought out process of compensation, and the solid base of support for it among slave owners, non-slave owners, and a significant number of abolitionists, demonstrates that there was indeed a massively funded form of government reparations—but it was called compensation. Draper details the complex calculation that created a formula for compensation. Not everyone was happy with it, and some slave owners, such as the seventy-year old widow Dorothy Little from Bristol who inherited her husband's fourteen slaves in Jamaica, were cut out almost entirely. Little owned no land in Jamaica, and therefore stood to receive little or no compensation once her slaves were freed. Her primary income appears to have been derived from renting out her slaves; emancipation without compensation threatened to leave her destitute in the last years of her life.

Examples such as Little reveal the significant diversity among British slave owners. For instance, "resident" owners often overlapped into absentee ownership when they retired but maintained ownership for decades after returning to Britain. Absentee owners themselves varied significantly in scale and type of ownership; some were merchants who also owned slaves but aspired to become more like their well-to-do compatriots whose success derived almost solely from the profits of slave labor. Other small-scale owners such as Little similarly depended on slave labor but did so simply to maintain a far more modest lifestyle.

The Slave Compensation Commerce Commission's fairly rigid formula ultimately benefitted large-scale slave owners. They and the merchant owners scrambled to receive compensation, which helps to explain why Caribbean absentee owners received 51 to 55 percent of all the compensation awarded to British slave owners.

One ironic result of the age of emancipation was that large-scale slave owners increasingly embraced their identity as slave owners. While most had not

initiated ownership (they more often were “reluctant planters” who had married into or inherited slave ownership), the financial liquidity that compensation offered motivated them to accept and even advocate for their status as slave owners in order to enhance or restore family finances. And even though they, along with merchant owners, were a minority among those with political influence in rural and urban areas, they were often strategically and disproportionately positioned among the elite in Britain’s political and financial landscape. Ultimately the capital these owners accrued proved to be one of several significant sources of “funding for new industrial and infrastructure development, above all the railway boom” (p. 269). Unsurprisingly, though compensation helped dismantle slavery, it did not offer any financial reward to the formerly enslaved in the new industrializing political economy.

This book is a valuable contribution to emancipation studies, and most appropriate for upper-level undergraduate or graduate-level courses.

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Christine Chivallon

L'esclavage, du souvenir à la mémoire: Contribution à une anthropologie de la Caraïbe. Paris: Karthala / CIRESC, 2012. 618 pp. (Paper, €36.00)

Christine Chivallon introduces her book as a contribution to the current discussions taking place in France and its dependencies about memories of slavery. The debate oscillates between the desire to commemorate and the wish to “bring repentance to an end.” Confronted with such contradictory aspirations, Chivallon chooses to focus on “memories already there, already alive, already constituted” (p. 19). This project to restore the existing memory of slavery in Martinique relies on archival research, “in an attempt to recover the ‘truth’ of the event” and on the involvement of the “bearers of memory” (p. 165).

The event at the core of the book nevertheless occurs after the period of slavery. Although the Insurrection of the South took place twenty-two years after Abolition, it is closely connected to slavery, as the book shows. In reality, over twenty years after Abolition, the structure of Martinican society—that is, the relationship between dominators and dominated—remained essentially the same as that of the preceding period. *Békés* (white creoles) were still the main property owners, even though Abolition had allowed a mulatto and black peasantry, however threatened, to emerge. The Second Empire had, moreover, brought an end to universal suffrage, instituted forced labor, and subjected everyone to taxation, forcing the newly-freed to work, mostly as labor on the plantations. In addition, the plantocracy had activated new migratory flows in an effort to saturate the demand for labor and impose the lowest possible salaries. It was therefore in a context of exacerbated frustration, faced with a situation in which continuities prevailed over reconfigurations, that the insurrection was triggered. Significantly, a number of insurgents, including many leaders of the revolt, came from the colored peasantry, whose development was undermining the dominance of the large estates by competing for labor and land.

Putting together the names of insurgents found in the archives with those found in cadastral records, Chivallon examines the memory traces left among their descendants. The core event in the stories she uncovered is the collective execution of Codé, a white creole. And this is where a temporal confusion occurs: Codé is described as a torturer of slaves, an oppressor with extreme methods. “This tendency to displace the 1870 event to the period of slavery might indicate not so much an anachronism resulting from a ‘false memory’ as an understanding of contemporary conditions as a holdover from the institution of slavery” (p. 386).

Furthermore, one objective of the insurgents was the redistribution of land

taken from the Békés, putting an end to the limited access to the land that was part of the system of slavery—a problem that remains unresolved to this day. Recent political movements to occupy land do so in the name of the events of 1870. And, just as the memory of the insurrection period confused it with the period of slavery, this unquenched thirst for land produces a similar temporal confusion; as one land occupation activist told Chivallon, he “feels almost as if he were still in a slavery system” (p. 489).

The persistent memories revealed and studied in the book pose the question of the persistence of colonialism in Martinique. This continuity stems from the State’s ongoing support of white creole interests, and its adherence to a racialized vision of social relations. In this respect, the tendency, strong under the Ancien Régime, the Empire, and the Second Empire, lives on in the republican era. The merciless trial of the 1870 insurgents took place under the Third Republic. And today, rather than enforcing court decisions unfavorable to the land squatters (a risky procedure now), the State chooses to offer liberal compensation to the land owners, “a solution which, examined more closely, could appear as the proof of support from the State of the old plantocracy” (p. 478). Because the need for a comprehensive agrarian reform is then bypassed.

What we learn from this study goes beyond the case of Martinique. The Insurrection of the South is compared to the Morant Bay Rebellion. The two revolts have much in common, including their historical moment and the objectives pursued (the questioning of colonial injustice, of the racial hierarchies, and of the monopolization of the land tenure). While repressive government response to these revolts differed, the most significant differences were that the Jamaican insurgents found defenders among the whites (particularly in Britain), while the Martinicans found just one, a Béké, considered an “eccentric” (p. 307).

This work is a deep reflection about memory, about its reconstruction from crumbs of data, about its effects, uses, and challenges. It is, finally, a valorization of the memory of the dominated. It is, in this respect, a remarkable extension of the quote from Paul Gilroy that Chivallon uses as an epigraph for her book: “The time has come for the primal history of modernity to be reconstructed from the slaves’ points of view. These emerge in the especially acute consciousness of both life and freedom which is nourished by the slave’s ‘mortal terror of his sovereign master’” (p. 6, quoting *The Black Atlantic*, p. 55).

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Daniel Desormeaux (ed.)

Mémoires du général Toussaint Louverture. Toussaint Louverture. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011. 237 pp. (Paper €29.00)

This book offers various gates to enter into Toussaint Louverture's universe, almost imposing a nonlinear reading. After the foreword, which is mainly Desormeaux's tribute to Haitians and foreigners who paved the way for his research (especially Saint-Remy to whom the book is dedicated), you reach a long and rich introduction recalling the genesis of Toussaint Louverture's "memoirs," their fortunes, and their place in the typology of the genre. It is a work of great erudition written in a language free of academic jargon, although pedantic sometimes, as if the author, fascinated by the mass of accumulated information, wanted at any cost to impose his voice as Master. Desormeaux uses both poetics and history (literary or political), both military art and philosophy to evaluate the first edition of the memoirs by Saint-Remy (incorrectly spelled Saint-Rémy). At the same time, he justifies the value of his own volume, which gives the full text of the fourth and final manuscript, "*Memoir for the General Toussaint Louverture*,"¹ with an elaborate critical apparatus. In addition, an annex, almost devoid of notes, offers a diplomatic transcription of the first manuscript handwritten by Louverture himself. This first state of the louverturian text is followed by the "*Journal of General Caffarelli*," which includes a summary of Caffarelli's interrogations of Toussaint, at the express request of Napoleon. These twenty rather factual pages contextualize, up to a point, the imprisonment of the Man of Breda at Fort de Joux in 1802. In his introduction, Desormeaux decisively establishes the authenticity and historical value of all four manuscripts of the memoirs. On this last point, it is important to quote his detailed (though brief) description of the four documents of which the originals are in the Archives Nationales (AN) and Archives Nationales d'outre-mer (ANOM), call numbers AN, AF / IV / 1213 and ANOM, EE1734:²

- 1 I have italicized here in order to highlight the difference established by Desormeaux between this text dictated by Toussaint Louverture to a scribe, "Jeannin Secrétaire de la place du château de Joux," (as he calls himself in a letter to Isaac Louverture [pp. 213–14]), and the manuscript entitled, "*Mémoire du général Toussaint Louverture*," written in Toussaint's hand.
- 2 Three of these manuscripts are available, with an introductory note by Philippe R. Girard, in the online journal *Annales*; see <http://Annales.ehess.fr/index.php?283> (consulted June 13, 2013).

By *Memoirs* (in plural, with a capital “M”), I mean all four complete handwritten versions, with some variations, of the “official” account of Toussaint of his reign in Saint-Domingue: a manuscript written entirely by Toussaint himself (which is the original), a second written in French by someone else, but dictated by Toussaint, which contains several deletions and annotations in the margins by Toussaint, a third written entirely by another scribe which includes some erasures and a note by Toussaint at the end, and a fourth impeccably copied by somebody but with the same note at the end (which leads us to assume that it is the final version officially submitted to the First Consul).

pp. 15–16

This elegant definition of a corpus by itself reflects a book rich in methodology and teaching. Despite some unfortunate typos (negligence of the publisher, we guess) it is already a classic of our literatures.

Finally, we must note that between Desormeaux’s introduction and Toussaint Louverture’s text, three pages of “chronological and biographical benchmarks of Toussaint’s life” are inserted, mainly for a general audience, which we can skip or read with interest to refresh our memory or to have a general idea of this historical period. This latter task is made easier by the “Index of names” that allows us to quickly find the footnotes on the main actors of the Haitian Revolution, or essayists who have contributed information on Toussaint Louverture and his work since the nineteenth century. These biographical notices are of unequal value. Some are much more developed than others; some include the sources that support them, while others do not; and a couple of them only repeat the doxa on the actors of 1804. For the most part they offer new perspectives, if not new knowledge, on the Haitian Revolution. This lack of uniformity is a consequence of the unequal state of development of historical knowledge on different characters and events. But the fact remains that all these notes bring us a great body of knowledge that this author of writings such as *La Figure du bibliomane: histoire du livre et stratégie littéraire au XIXe siècle* has been able to dig up for our delight. *Chapeau*, Desormeaux!

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Marika Sherwood

Origins of Pan-Africanism: Henry Sylvester Williams, Africa, and the African Diaspora. London: Routledge, 2010. xvi + 354 pp. (Cloth US\$125.00)

Henry Sylvester Williams's was one of the most unlikely and remarkable lives, even for a child of the African diaspora. Born in Barbados in 1867 (not Trinidad in 1869, as previously thought), he accompanied his working-class parents to Trinidad, where he grew up in Arouca with five younger siblings. He barely acquired a secondary education, but in subsequent years became not only a qualified barrister in London, but also the first black man admitted to the bar in Cape Town, one of the first two elected black borough councilors in London, the publisher and editor of a monthly magazine, the author of a booklet, the representative—at the seat of the British Empire—of various Southern and West African political organizations and pressure groups, and the convener of the first Pan-African Conference (London 1900), three years after he had founded the African Association, comprising continental and diaspora Africans. He died in Trinidad in 1911 at age 44, less than three years after returning home from his long sojourn abroad.

He was long forgotten and under-appreciated after his death, even in Trinidad and even by people who should have known better. The self-serving and prolific W.E.B. Du Bois, who attended the 1900 conference, barely mentions Williams. C.L.R. James (Williams's countryman), "that intellectual prodigy and indefatigable delver into the Caribbean past, ... seemed somewhat uncertain exactly *what* Williams had done before and after July 1900" (Hooker 1975:2). Williams was resurrected almost forty years ago by two pioneering biographies—the first (1975) by J.R. Hooker, the American historian and biographer of George Padmore (another Trinidadian giant of the Pan-African movement), and the other by the Trinidadian journalist, Owen Mathurin (1976). Though valuable in their contribution and noble in their goals, both books suffer from the common affliction of pioneering work—incompleteness, unfinished business. This flaw, however, becomes understandable when one considers the dearth of archival material on Williams. To their credit, both men frankly acknowledged the lacunae in their work. Mathurin remarked that his writing of Williams's biography was "seriously handicapped by the limited amount of material readily available. There are, for example, few letters and personal documents and writings" (1976: x). Hooker was brutally frank:

I am aware of the weaknesses in my reconstruction, though I trust none will fault my sympathies with my subject. There are certain bibliographical possibilities, requiring time and effort I could not afford, which others

may act upon, at least I hope they will. I have chosen to include several quite lengthy extracts from obscure publications, so that that this *essay* will remain of some use to students, if only as a sort of primary source.

1975:2, my emphasis

Many of these handicaps have not dissipated with time. No large files of Williams's letters, and no journals or diaries have been discovered since the biographies by Hooker and Mathurin. Nevertheless, partly drawing on their pioneering work—including interviews with subjects, now long-dead, quoted in their books—Marika Sherwood has provided the definitive biography of Henry Sylvester Williams, a subject worthy of her Herculean effort. An independent and independent-minded scholar, Sherwood has been at the forefront of some of the most exciting developments in black British and African diaspora history in the U.K. for over a generation.

Through a series of fifteen tightly-packed chapters, often having only scattered archival fragments to draw on, Sherwood follows Williams unblinkingly from his childhood and young adulthood in Trinidad (c. 1867–1891), through his sojourn in North America, London, South Africa, his return to London, his visit to West Africa, and his final return to Trinidad in 1908, where he died. Throughout the story, she is eager not only to tell of Williams's doings and thoughts (where discernible), but also the context (including the racial climate) in which he operated.

Sherwood managed to uncover aspects of Williams's life that were previously unknown and long regarded as unknowable. For instance, between 1891 and 1896 Williams lived in the United States and Canada, first living in New York City (though shipping records do not register his landing there) and studying at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia between 1893 and 1894. Beyond this, little was known of the five years before he turned up in London. Now we have a more filled out, if still incomplete, picture of Williams's life in North America, which Sherwood meticulously put together through an imaginative use of archival fragments (Chapter 2). He almost certainly worked as a Pullman railway porter in both the United States and Canada. We have a clearer idea of the people he probably met, particularly influential African American activists, many of whom reappeared in connection with the Pan African Conference. Sherwood clarifies the Dalhousie University experience and the reasons for his going to London in 1896 and provides the most comprehensive analysis of Williams in South Africa and his active commitment in operating as a representative of aggrieved Southern and West African groups (see especially Chapters 10, 11, 13, and 14).

Though clearly sympathetic toward Williams during his struggles, defeats, and accomplishments, Sherwood is vigilant in registering his flaws, documenting the moments when he seemed rather naïve about British imperial intentions, especially in South Africa, and when he revealed an all too typical New World African condescension toward his continental African “brothers and sisters” and the need for their “civilization.” What emerges is a flawed Williams, but no less an energetic, selfless, and courageous fighter against injustice, who despite everything managed to carry himself with uncommon grace and dignity.

It must be hoped that this book will soon be published in a paperback edition, since the price of the current edition confines it almost exclusively to well-heeled university and college libraries. A republication would also allow a few annoying copy-editing oversights to be rectified, including the persistent misnaming of Edward Wilmot Blyden as *Edmund* Wilmot Blyden.

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William Mulligan & Maurice Bric (eds.)

A Global History of Anti-Slavery Politics in the Nineteenth Century. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. viii + 254 pp. (Cloth US\$85.00)

Over the past twenty years, there has been a movement among slavery scholars to expand their frameworks, stressing ever broader transnational comparisons and connections. This volume edited by William Mulligan and Maurice Bric continues to push the envelope. Their eclectic and thought provoking collection explores the international dimensions of the nineteenth-century antislavery movement and its legacy—eleven essays from specialists based around the world that touch on places as far flung as Russia, the Congo, Sierra Leone, Haiti, the United States, the Ottoman Empire, Britain, Germany, Spain, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and France. Mulligan rather succinctly states the phenomenon that every contributor to the book seeks to address on some level. “By the late 1880s,” he explains, “the abolition of slavery and suppression of the slave trade had become a global issue. A century earlier it had not been evident that slavery was morally wrong” (p. 166). Thus the key questions for the contributors are how, why, and to what extent antislavery sentiment became the global norm. It is clear from this book that focusing on one nation will never allow us to adequately answer those questions.

The essays cohere around a few specific issues in this study of antislavery as a global phenomenon, the most consistent theme being the relationship between local political concerns or individual political actors and the increasingly global antislavery and humanitarian movements. They are not, however, just focused on power politics or the relations among nation states. They are also concerned with the intersections between politics and intellectual history. The kind of intellectual history in which these authors engage is, for the most part, nuanced and sophisticated. Far from studying disembodied or static ideas, most of them highlight the way key individuals and the enslaved themselves shaped a constant interplay of politics and ideas. Simon Morgan’s essay approaches the role of individuals in the propagation of ideas in particularly creative ways, exploring what he calls the “politics of personality” (p. 79) by looking at how the celebrity status of prominent activists influenced the spread of antislavery ideas.

Another critically important theme in this collection is the origin and nature of humanitarianist sentiments and human rights thinking, and the relationship of these to local political concerns and security interests. It is all too easy to offer a whiggish history of humanitarianism and human rights, painting their spread as uncomplicated, unidirectional, and even inevitable, and celebrating this set of ideas as a marker of moral progress. The greatest contribution

that this volume makes as a whole is to historicize and problematize humanitarianism and human rights thinking by demonstrating how dynamic, complicated, and contingent these ideas were in the nineteenth century and how such thinking differed from more modern conceptions of human rights. Yet the book also highlights striking similarities between nineteenth-century humanitarian interventions and their modern incarnations. Mulligan, for example, argues (with other essays supporting his observation) that in the nineteenth century “the universal claims of liberalism legitimated violent humanitarianism” (p. 155).

Andrea Nicholson, a legal scholar, offers the book’s most intriguing essay. She argues that modern antislavery campaigns have failed to offer “real protection” (p. 232) to slaves because too many people have drawn false distinctions between modern and older forms of slavery and because “slavery is not on the international agenda as it was in the nineteenth century, meaning that it is not a state priority” (p. 230). She argues persuasively for a return to the kind of domestic suppression of the slave trade that was successful in the nineteenth century and suggests that “states should perhaps emulate the nineteenth-century campaign by taking on greater responsibility in initiating effective domestic antislavery measures” (p. 231). Her essay can best be read as a general conclusion for the whole volume. It adds significance and explanatory weight to a collection that too often seems scattered in scope as it struggles to pull together the strands of a global history.

This book raises even more questions than it answers about the interconnectedness of the international antislavery movement and the ways in which nineteenth- and twentieth-century labor systems were transformed to adapt to antislavery laws. The essays are focused on Europe and the Americas but the Danish and Dutch receive surprisingly little attention. The Danes in particular are conspicuously absent given that they were the first European power to abolish the transatlantic trade. Readers will also be left wondering about the impact of Western antislavery movements on other places in the world such as Asia or among indigenous societies in the Americas. Little is said about the use of East Indian or Chinese indentured labor in the Americas in the nineteenth century and the way those forms were conceptualized in an age of antislavery sentiment.

This is not the kind of book that will be useful for undergraduates or even for graduate training. Many of the essays rely on specialist knowledge. Only one—Ehud R. Toledano’s on the Ottoman Empire—offers an in-depth historiographical overview of its subject. Nevertheless, the collection will inspire slavery specialists to continue to make global connections and comparisons and it may encourage us to think more about why coerced labor and human

trafficking still flourish today despite the entrenchment in the nineteenth century of the global conviction that the institution of slavery was morally wrong.

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Bernd Reiter & Kimberley Eison Simmons (eds.)

Afro-Descendants, Identity and the Struggle for Development in the Americas. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2012. xxx + 314 pp. (Paper US\$ 34.95)

This wide-ranging collection of essays on Afro-descendant populations throughout the Americas originated in a 2010 conference entitled “Reexamining the Black Atlantic: Afro-Descendants Still at the Bottom?” at the University of South Florida’s Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean. The prologue, introduction, and conclusion are all by Bernd Reiter; Kimberley Eison Simmons’s contribution is limited to one substantive chapter. Given the increasing recognition and vocal resistance of Afro-descendant populations, the collection is timely and useful, swinging a spotlight across a range of countries, and including the voices of academics, activists, and other stakeholders. This makes for a lively and diverse tone to the collection, with an emphasis on a combination of breadth of accessibility with depth of understanding.

Although the collection has dropped the unifying framing of the Black Atlantic, Gilroy’s concept continues to haunt the volume. The first two sections are entitled “The Black Atlantic Reexamined” and “Double-Consciousness and Black Identity—Globalized,” but most of the chapters do not mention the Black Atlantic at all. Reiter refers to the book only very briefly at the beginning of the conclusion, while Faye V. Harrison, in the first substantive chapter, ably critiques its use as a cartographic category for people of African descent, since it leaves out as much as it includes—the African diaspora is of course global, and the Black Pacific must be as important as the Black Atlantic. It might sound like nit-picking (and to some extent I’d concede that it arises from a certain unreasonable irritation), but it is perhaps indicative of some of the conceptual difficulties of this kind of collaborative collection. First, one can select “Black Atlantic” as a conceptual frame in a call for papers, but responses do not necessarily engage with it, and it may actually be to the editors’ credit that they do not attempt to impose this framing in the scoping chapters. In the introduction, Reiter goes through a number of possible framings for the conceptualization of Afro-descent (race, culture, development, postcolonial), each of which is present in various papers, but none of which can be seen as really holding them together. Second, collections take time to bring together—the two-year period between the conference and the publication dates is not very long considering the breadth of the collection, but within that time “Black Atlantic” has moved from being on top of a wave of discussion in U.S. academic circles to seeming slightly dated, particularly in terms of the kinds of loose deployments that occurred at the top of its wave. The time lag may explain why “Black Atlantic”

no longer appears in the title of the collection but continues to ghost uncomfortably around its edges. An actual in-depth engagement with the substance of Gilroy's concepts concerning race and identity might not have dated quite so quickly as this loose haunting.

Having got all that off my chest, I do want to emphasize that the volume brings together an interesting collection of papers, each of which makes its own contribution, and the overall effect of which is to provide an agenda around Afro-descent in Latin America and the Caribbean that has truly arrived on the global scene. The first part of the book sets out contexts and histories for the movement. Faye V. Harrison's excellent chapter sets out an agenda around human rights and citizenship, in which she shows that addressing racism in relation to African-descent identities necessitates both a continued interrogation of the assumptions behind the category "human" and a sensitive sense of transborder coalition in which the specificities of local knowledges and self-identifications are not subsumed beneath inadequate and excluding theoretical frameworks. Darièn J. Davis, Tianna S. Paschel, and Judith A. Morrison then set out a history of pan-Afro-Latin American movements, tracing their development from early twentieth-century pan-African conferences to the realization that black organizations in the Americas could hold their governments to account following the Santiago and Durban conferences on racism in the early twenty-first century. Both of these chapters focus on the building of pan-continental collectivities that maintain a clear awareness of located specificity and diversity.

The rest of the book, divided into three sections, offers a range of case studies that explore this diversity. In the second section, Simmons's chapter is particularly subtle in highlighting the shifting of racial meanings across borders, showing how the difference between African-American "bipolar racial categorization" (p. 76) and Caribbean color gradations translates into concrete re-readings of visible characteristics such as hair and skin color, both for African-American students traveling to the Dominican Republic, and for Dominican migrants to the United States. Read together with Juliet Hooker's chapter on the combinations of race, ethnicity, and location in Nicaragua that shift both meanings and strategies in relation to multicultural politics, it is possible to see how racialized identifications in the twenty-first century follow a range of complex historical routes, resulting in complex localized and transborder politics. Section 3 provides a range of evidence of continued racial discrimination, especially in societies that would like to present themselves as "raceless," while Section 4 highlights the importance of recognizing and working with people's localized understandings and knowledges. Mamyrah A. Dougé-Prosper's chapter on the "Take Back the Land" campaign in Florida reveals even more aspects

of diversity, highlighting in particular that few chapters (with the exception of the one by Altagracia Balcácer Molina and Dorotea Wilson) really focus on the difference that gender makes to Afro-descendant experience.

Overall, this complexly diverse collection will be useful to a wide range of people who are interested in the politics and the lived experience of race in the Americas.

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Shona N. Jackson

Creole Indigeneity: Between Myth and Nation in the Caribbean. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012. xii + 310 pp. (Paper US\$25.00)

Guyana, like many parts of the Caribbean, has a long history of interculturality, and includes descendants of the original inhabitants of the region (locally referred to as Amerindians), the original migrant Europeans, the transported (enslaved) Africans, and the coerced (indentured) Portuguese, Chinese, and Indians. But who “belongs” to this nation from a political, historical, and literary perspective? In *Creole Indigeneity*, Shona Jackson challenges readers by asking this question, and as a solution, suggests a rethinking of the term “Indigenous,” shifting away from common understandings of “people of a place,” to a reinvention of belonging through material and discursive means. Beginning with a detailed analysis of both the real and the figurative displacement of Amerindians within the country, she acknowledges the marginalization experienced by Guyana’s original inhabitants, and discusses how they have come to represent an “internal South” (p. 13) within the national economy. Through a review of historical social practices, political decision-making, and legal documentation, she demonstrates the appalling condition of Guyanese Amerindian rights; her critique of these records and processes is one of the highlights of the book.

In formulating her theory of “Creole Indigeneity,” Jackson argues that this Amerindian displacement is the “necessary or enabling condition of black being in the Caribbean” (p. 28), as it is only through the repositioning of Creole Guyanese as “people of the land,” that they can then be seen as “Indigenous.” This repositioning is accomplished in the introduction and the first chapter, specifically with reference to labor as a Creole mode of belonging, and as the basis for this reformulated subaltern, or settler, Indigeneity. The next two chapters explore typical literary tropes of the Caribbean and their potential usefulness for understanding “Creole Indigeneity.” Beginning with an examination of postcolonial adaptations of Shakespeare’s Caliban (*The Tempest*), particularly in Aimé Césaire’s *A Tempest*, Jackson argues that as Creoles replaced Amerindians in Guyana, so did African-influenced Caliban figures replace Shakespeare’s original conceptualization. Specifically, the master-slave relationship between Caliban and Prospero shifts away from one of colonially-based domination to one where labor is rescripted to encourage cultural integration.

Returning to Guyana, Jackson argues that myth, like labor, changes historical discourse, allowing it to articulate “new” cultural and political ideologies. In suggesting that myth, as a social construction, provides a window into a particular society, she shows how Creole populations re-imagine their places foundationally as places of belonging. Focusing on the myth of El Dorado, readers

are encouraged to see metaphorically the colonial riches, particularly of sugar, as representative of the country's "great wealth," which continues to inform contemporary relationships of Guyanese people to the land. Through this act, Jackson shifts El Dorado from the mythic to the active by equating it with capitalist practices generally, thereby demonstrating its productive potential.

The strongest chapters in the book depart from this literary analysis, and concentrate more on Guyana's politically turbulent history, especially the post-independence years. Beginning with the Burnham administration and the predominantly Afro-Guyanese PNC, Jackson follows her thread of "Creole Indigeneity" through the nationalization policies during the era of Cooperative Socialism by demonstrating how through both economic and cultural means, the government sought to consolidate Guyanese identity as "one people." Following on from 1992 with the election of the PPP under Cheddi Jagan, a continuation of creolization is suggested through distinctive Indo-Guyanese diasporic comparisons, designed to demonstrate "a *difference* as historical subjects" (p. 209, her emphasis).

Unfortunately, in arguing that Indo-Guyanese belonging has been modeled on Creole belonging, Jackson potentially weakens her position. Although she proposes that "Creole, as a cultural term, applies not to Indians but to Africans" (p. 46), in reality, all of Guyana's "six nations" have woven their identities together, producing a thoroughly multicultural nation by means of an ongoing process of creolization. Therefore, while the rethinking of settler and subaltern power and the way it contributes to a sense of belonging and potential political sovereignty is useful, I remain unconvinced that "Indigeneity" is the most helpful identifier of this process, and would suggest instead that a holistic understanding of the term "creolization" would be both more inclusive, and more relevant for this multi-ethnic nation.

That aside, *Creole Indigeneity* challenges readers to rethink both historic and modern relationships among the diverse populations of Guyana (specifically re-examining Jackson's demonstration of the neocolonial othering of Amerindians), the land, and each population's labor upon that land. It also raises important questions about the ways in which those relationships help define belonging, materially and discursively, focusing particularly on the Afro-Guyanese segment of the society. As such, this book will be useful for students and scholars of Black and Diaspora Studies, as well as Caribbean Studies more generally. Finally, the incorporation of a literary studies approach within historical and political subjectivities and policy and legislation analysis provides an interesting methodological example for weaving different academic perspectives together, which may well encourage others to follow suit.

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Lauren Derby

The Dictator's Seduction: Politics and the Popular Imagination in the Era of Trujillo.

Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2009. xvi + 411 pp. (Paper US\$25.95)

The Dictator's Seduction revisits the history of one of Latin America's longest authoritarian regimes, General Rafael Trujillo's dictatorship in the Dominican Republic (1930–1961). Lauren Derby argues that while Trujillo and his secret police used terror to establish control over the population, Trujillo also consolidated his rule by embracing “popular [cultural] forms such as gossip, gift exchange, fictive kinship, and witchcraft into the repertoire of domination” (p. 7). The book shifts attention to subjects that other scholars have dismissed as “window dressing” by considering the regime’s “political liturgy” (the state’s mass politics), Trujillo’s “theater state” (the grand processions and celebrations that marked important dates or events), and Trujillo’s “vernacular politics.” These cultural formations made power both negotiable and terrorizing for those who found themselves outside Trujillo’s or the Dominican Party’s graces.

As Derby explains in Chapter 1, U.S. occupation was particularly important in creating a crisis that provoked critical reflections among Dominicans about the state and political culture. Standard narratives of this period focus on the political instability that erupted in the wake of U.S. control, but Derby argues that U.S. intervention destroyed the edifice of Dominican liberalism. Dominican liberal elites lost control over the state and, as a result, access to its financial resources. This lack of political power transformed into the loss of their cultural hegemony, precipitating, Derby writes, a crisis in masculinity. As a result of the occupation, violence and repression became legitimate mechanisms of rule.

In Chapter 2, Derby details how Trujillo’s rise to power was assisted by the San Zenón hurricane, which struck Santo Domingo in September 1930. An event that could have ended Trujillo’s nascent regime became, instead, the “founding myth of the Era of Trujillo” (p. 69). The hurricane’s devastation provided an opportunity for Trujillo to define himself as a leader when he proved adept at supplying much-needed services during the hurricane’s immediate aftermath. Most important, though, Trujillo’s reconstruction scheme allowed him to define and make concrete Dominican modernity in Santo Domingo’s new landscape.

Chapter 3 makes the compelling argument that sexual conquest “brought [Trujillo] respect and was a key element in his legitimacy as a caudillo-turned-statesman” (p. 111). Trujillo’s young daughter Angelita, and his lover Lina Lovatón, served as especially powerful symbols of the regime. Through their whiteness, femininity, and respectability Trujillo was able to express his power and domination. While Angelita represented the regime’s nurturing side, Lina sym-

bolized Trujillo's masculine prowess, especially as a man of questionable racial ancestry who sexually conquered a white woman from the elite. Derby's interpretation of Trujillo's "theater state" in this way has serious implications for how we understand states as gendered regimes. As she notes, Trujillo's dictatorship is unique in that the iconic female figure of the regime was not the First Lady. Moreover, as symbolic figures, Angelita and Lina did not "engender popular loathing of women in the public sphere or an obsessive concern with [Trujillo's] sexual exploits" (p. 112). Instead, displaying the daughter and the mistress helped create a myth around Trujillo as a man who consolidated his role as the leader.

In Chapters 5 and 6, Derby completes her examination of Trujillo's self-fashioning through the popular vernacular of the *tíguere*. In contrast to a tradition of presidential image making rooted in an erudite, liberal respectability, Trujillo embraced another kind of masculine idiom, *tígueraje*, "to enable non-white, lower-class men to identify with the regime" (p. 174). The *tíguere* is an urban-based man who earns *respeto* and achieves some social mobility on the basis of his street smarts, sexual conquests, and overall success at transgressing social boundaries of race and class. Trujillo's daughter, Flor Trujillo, and her husband, Porfirio Rubirosa (Rubi), became iconic figures of this new Dominican modernity defined by excess, glamor, and consumption. Rafael, Rubi, and Flor Trujillo redefined the mechanism through which social mobility could be achieved.

Nevertheless, even as the ceremonial state brought all Dominicans into the regime's modernizing embrace, power and authority within the state remained unequally distributed and was allotted at Trujillo's behest. Chapters 4 and 7 delve into aspects of Trujillista practice that have until now been dismissed by scholars of authoritarianism: public denunciations, exaggerated, honorific speech, and mythical descriptions of Trujillo's body. Taken together, denouncing corrupt, mid-level bureaucrats, praising Trujillo in formal speeches, even grappling with the metaphysical and mystical articulations of Trujillo's power were important parts of the culture of state terror that Trujillo and his secret police forces inflicted on the Dominican population. It is here that Derby confronts troubling questions in the study of authoritarian regimes: how does terror become normal, and does acquiescence to state terror necessarily mean compliance with authoritarianism?

For many decades and among many scholars of Latin American politics, Trujillo represented the ultimate *caudillo*; he imbibed fully the pretensions and tragedies of personalistic rule and charismatic statesmanship. By emphasizing personality, this scholarship ignored the Dominican public's complex relationship to the regime. Derby's book represents an important call for a renewed

attention to the relationships between quotidian exertions of authority and those engineered by the state.

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Myriam J.A. Chancy

From Sugar to Revolution: Women's Visions of Haiti, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012. xxxiii + 358 pp.
(Cloth US\$85.00)

The devastating Haitian earthquake of January 12, 2010 reminded the world of the existence of a country that, despite the central role it played in revealing both the emancipatory potential and the intrinsic limitations of the Enlightenment project, has long been side-lined or, as Myriam Chancy puts it, relegated to “the margin of the margins” (p. xviii). In fact, it was distressing but not entirely surprising that some newspapers (for example, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Washington Post* and the *Telegraph*) reporting on the catastrophe referred to Haiti as an “island” or as an “island nation,” clearly ignoring the fact that Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic.

In the introduction to her engaging study, Chancy forcefully urges scholars to stop approaching Haiti as a country severed from the rest of Hispaniola and from the Caribbean and Latin America as a whole. A reframing of Caribbean studies that has Haiti as a starting point and that foregrounds the experience of Afro-Caribbean women is crucial, Chancy insists, for the pursuit of “a new consciousness” that could redraw the entire region in more positive and less distorted and distorting ways (p. xxx).

From Sugar to Revolution brings to the fore deep connections and collaborative linkages between Haiti, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic dating back to colonial times while revisiting, in a stimulating way, national discourses from the perspective of women writers and artists. Elegantly written and passionately argued, the book puts female writers and artists from these nations in energetic, transnational, interdisciplinary dialogue with one another and with their contexts. For example, Chancy offers an astute reading of the Dominican artist Dorandy Mercado's *Mujeres: Dominican Men's Favorite Sport* (2010) where old, unstitched baseballs spread over a female mannequin to form the “skin” of a sculpture, denouncing a *macho* culture where women are still (mis)treated as a game to be played by men. Her analysis, however, acquires further poignancy when she informs us that the baseballs used by Mercado were in fact sown by disenfranchised Haitian women who, during the Duvaliers' regime, were exploited in the name of “American” sport (p. 230).

Chancy organizes her dynamic argument in three parts. Part I, “Sugar: Haiti,” focuses on the Dominican American writers Julia Alvarez and Angie Cruz and on the Haitian American author Edwidge Danticat. Using as her springboard the 1937 massacre of Haitians and Haitian-Dominicans orchestrated by Trujillo, she investigates the ways in which the writing of the three authors, countering

or reproducing racist, xenophobic, and sexist dominant discourses, negotiate both the geographical border and the historical trauma from the perspective of their particular nation and their diasporic position. At the same time, she underlines both the revelations and the omissions that are inherent in these accounts and deeply affect both the recovery of a tragic past and the construction of a better future.

In Part II, "Sovereignty: Cuba," the writers Zoé Valdés and Nancy Moréjon are put in a productive transgenerational dialogue in which they assess, in different ways, the effects of the Cuban Revolution on racial exclusion and sexualized exploitation. Part II is further enriched by a sustained discussion of the "restorative art" of the expatriate Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, who gives primacy to the experience of Afro-Cuban women (p. 174).

Part III, "Revolution: the Dominican Republic," features fiction by the Dominican American Loida Maritza Pérez, but also short stories by the Cuban writer Marilyn Bobes and the Cuban American Achy Obejas. The "subversive sexualities" (p. 227) explored by these writers are read against Cuban and Dominican landscapes but also against the U.S. landscape where some of their "queer" subjects relocate by choice or by force. Chancy persuasively argues for the inclusion of lesbian and bisexual voices in Caribbean discourse, whether they produce hopeful tales of liberation or distressing stories of patriarchal oppression and compulsive heterosexuality. Either way, paying attention to the life and experience of what she calls "the most liminal individuals within Dominican and Cuban society," she explains, "may shed light on the inner workings of power relations in each society" and on the triangular relationship between Haiti, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic since what Bobes, Obejas, and Pérez highlight, is also applicable to Haitian society (p. 235).

Each of the book's three parts is followed by a long and informative interview with, respectively, Danticat, María Magdalena Campos-Pons, and Pérez. Chancy, herself an acclaimed creative writer with roots in the Caribbean (Haiti and the Dominican Republic) and "displaced" in a North American context, declares that she entered in conversation with these women primarily because of their status as expatriates (p. xxxi). Engaging in redefinitions of national, regional, and transnational identities that have race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality at their core, Chancy and her interviewees try to imagine, together, a "new world" and a "new way of being" where ongoing inter-national, inter-racial and inter-generational conflicts can begin to heal (p. 300).

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Samuel Farber

Cuba since the Revolution of 1959: A Critical Assessment. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2011. ix + 369 pp. (Paper US\$ 24.00)

Samuel Farber has long maintained a unique position among students of Cuba. A Cuban-American who, having left before (rather than after) the Revolution, he has consistently written biting critiques of the Cuban system, but from the radical left rather than the usual Cuban-American position. This book is no exception, bringing to the task of analysis his familiar sharp eye for detail (which makes this book a Cuba-watcher's delight, with its wealth of statistical data and human detail), his trenchant criticisms of the shortcomings of both that system and U.S. (and U.S.-based) opposition, and making this study a welcome counterweight to uncritical admirers (for whom he reserves particular scorn), partisan critiques by the anti-Revolution right, or the ideological assumptions of the variegated liberal "center."

Not that this book is nonpartisan. As ever, Farber declares his politics openly from the outset, faithful to a pre-Soviet Marxist perspective which leads him to deny that Cuba is genuinely socialist, but still to see some value in what has been done. Indeed, that position drives much of the early critique—predictably condemning the "monolithic" state apparatus—and also some of the language, Farber occasionally making sweeping and unsubstantiated statements (about "clearly arbitrary" decisions [p. 45], or an undefined "bureaucracy," or using that well-worn Cold War cliché, totalitarianism), and especially his perhaps regrettable constant focus on Fidel.

But Farber is simply too astute an observer and too rigorous a historian to write badly, and that same position brings his sharpness of judgment and his constant use of evidence for his explanations. Although we are never in doubt about his politics, many of the chapters are written with an evident commitment to truth and honesty—not a liberal balance (seeing the positives of both sides), but an acknowledgement of undeniable realities.

The result is an invaluable contribution to the literature on Cuba. Presented thematically (addressing economics and living standards, foreign policy, the place of the worker, race, gender, and dissidence), with an epilogue about the 2011 Party Congress and subsequent reforms, it can occasionally be somewhat uneven, but is never anything other than informative, fascinating, and readable, however much one might disagree with some of the judgments.

For example, the chapter on foreign policy shows a welcome subtlety and balance on a topic often subjected to stereotypical interpretations, as ever delivering little gems of analysis and observation: on Cuban "internationalism"

(owing more to nationalism than “proletarian solidarity”), on Castro’s complex motivations for supporting the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, on the peculiar tortuous relationship with Spain, and on the complex relationship with Moscow, Cuba acting less as a satellite than as a “junior partner.”

As one might expect, Farber’s study of the Revolution’s uneasy relationship with its workers is excellent, driven by his rejection of the idea of Cuba as a “workers’ state” but aware of the complexity and changing nature of that relationship. However, while rejecting the idea of a pre-1959 “labor aristocracy,” he insists (against small but growing evidence) that the pre-1959 working class was not significantly involved in either socialism or the process of rebellion.

Race is given the same thoughtful and subtle treatment, delving into all the roots and motives of Cuban “color-blindness” and residual racism. Gender too is addressed intelligently, with Farber, as on every topic, showing a deep awareness of the complexity of the issues discussed, weighing up especially well the pluses and the minuses of the Revolution’s record, and writing a particularly perceptive critique of the Revolution’s treatment of sexuality.

The final theme, dissidence, is perhaps more encyclopedic than analytical, but no less valuable for that; in Farber’s hands, it gives us a prodigiously detailed and well-informed survey of the range of recent dissidence, on groups’ and individuals’ political past and current positions (especially good on internal left dissent), but with a scathing—but nonetheless detailed—dismissal of the “exile” Right. Only the discussion of the Church, despite its astute moments, disappoints a little, rather ignoring the wider religious “community” (Afro-Cuban religions) and its curious relationship with the Revolution.

The conclusion also disappoints, becoming a manifesto for Farber’s position rather than a summing-up. It also highlights one curiosity of Farber’s approach; while he criticizes dissidents’ lack of an alternative and outlines his own position fully, if not clearly, we are not necessarily any clearer about what exactly his overall judgment is of the Revolution. While some leftist critiques begin (not necessarily helpfully) with an *a priori* explanation of Soviet-Bloc socialism, into which they fit Cuba, Farber does not do that. But while that leads to a more open-minded approach to the facts, he often seems unclear about the balance-sheet of the Revolution. Such a balance-sheet ought not to be required of most historians (seeing their task as neither supporting nor criticizing, but explaining analytically), but because Farber writes from a particular ideological position, that lack of clarity is something of an omission. One example: having spent much of the book arguing that what exists in Cuba is not socialism, he criticizes the direction of Raúl Castro’s reforms as moving away from socialism.

However, those flaws are marginally regrettable, and do not detract from the quality and value of the book as a whole, which significantly adds to our understanding and without question ought to be a part of any Cuba specialist's bookshelf. It is an excellent study that merits being taken seriously.

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Emilio Bejel

José Martí: Images of Memory and Mourning. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
xvii + 163 pp. (Cloth US\$85.00)

The history of José Martí's afterlife as Cuba's national hero is a tangled one. When he died in 1895, Martí was considerably less well known and celebrated on the island than fellow revolutionaries Máximo Gómez and Antonio Maceo. It took a new generation of left-leaning nationalists in the 1920s to begin the process of mythification and mystification that culminated in Martí's enshrinement as Cuba's secular "Apostle" of independence, not to mention his later repackaging as the Cuban Revolution's "intellectual author." Ottmar Ette's *José Martí: Apostel-Dichter-Revolutionär* (1991) remains the most comprehensive work explicitly devoted to Martí's reception history; more recently Lillian Guerra's *The Myth of Martí* (2005) focuses more narrowly on Martí's reputation during Cuba's first decades as a neocolonial state. But really anyone who has written about Martí since the 1934 abrogation of the Platt Amendment, and certainly after the Cuban Revolution, has done so in the shadow of his myth. The scholar's only real choices involve whether and how to engage the Martí myth, if not to demystify it, then at least to note the impossibility of doing so.

Emilio Bejel is no stranger to demystification, whether its object is Martí or Cuban nationalism. His *Gay Cuban Nation* (2001) is a fearless deconstruction of Cuban masculinity as it intersects with Cuban nationalism; its opening chapter, "The Building of a CondemNation," remains the most substantive study of Martí in a queer-studies context. Bejel's important new book examines the past and present of Martian iconography, a subject that perhaps pushes fewer and less visceral buttons than *Gay Cuban Nation* but is no less valuable for it. *José Martí: Images of Memory and Mourning* offers an ideal introduction for anyone interested in the making of Martí as a visual icon. The book's introduction and four chapters examine the history of Martian iconography across a range of media, from early photographs and posthumous monuments to contemporary representations of Martí in paintings and film.

If the book has a flaw, it lies in the gap between its methodology and its potential audiences. This problem emerges most clearly in the introduction, which for me is the book's weakest chapter. Bejel's core arguments are that viewers of Martian images experience a "retrospective reconstruction" that mediates their understanding of him as a national icon, and that the contents of this reconstruction—or as he describes it, "the history that interposes itself between the visual image and the observer's present"—fuel the corresponding devotion that such images inspire (pp. 5–6). These claims are both clearly, if broadly, stated and eminently plausible; but the rest of the introduction leaves

them in an awkward middle-ground between overview and the fuller theoretical analysis that the claims would seem to call for. No one would (I hope) dispute the idea that images of iconic historical people and events compel viewers to process them through the lens of received or retroactively-constructed historical narratives; neither is Bejel's assertion that such histories "are never neutral" really arguable (p. 6). But although later chapters explore and develop these ideas quite elegantly, the introduction itself provides very little further context for them; instead it cites a range of canonical and lesser-known thinkers (e.g. respectively Roland Barthes, Stuart Hall, and W.J.T. Mitchell on the one hand, Andrea Noble and Nancy Wood on the other) as the basis for a more thorough exposition that it doesn't perform.

The first chapter, which examines the Martían photographic archive in the context of the medium's development (pun intended) in the nineteenth century, is arguably the book's strongest. Bejel uses the broader context of photography's early manifestation in the daguerreotype, as well as the new medium's commercial establishment and cultural currency, to construct a deeper exploration of Martí's ambivalent attitudes toward new technologies and modernity in general.

The book's second chapter, "Battling for the National Icon," moves into the twentieth century and the history of Martían statues and monuments, successfully integrating his reading of individual monuments into a broader examination of the role that public monuments and shrines have played in Martí's enshrinement as national icon. Key to this analysis is Bejel's focus on the political motivations of the various Cuban governments that built the monuments in order to both manipulate his image to their political ends and assert themselves as the "Apostle's" rightful heirs.

The next two chapters, on contemporary representations of Martí in film and painting, respectively, allow Bejel to more fully explore the relationship between historical image and contemporary viewer, left undeveloped in his introduction. Filmic representations would seem to pose a special challenge for the historicization of a figure as closely associated with writing as Martí; this is perhaps why *El ojo del canario* [The Canary's Eye] (2010) uses the recurring visual trope of the adolescent Martí in the act of writing. Bejel wisely focuses on this element of the film to demonstrate how the film's emphasis on Martí as a writer becomes an integral part of the "*retrospective reconstruction* that the interested observer undertakes" of the iconic image, and how that reconstructed, historicized icon in turn produces the "reciprocal gaze" that fuels the viewers engagement with it.

The book's final chapter and brief epilogue ("Afterthoughts") turn toward the theme of melancholia (specifically "Cuban Melancholia," as he calls it in

the epilogue), a seeming digression that in retrospect makes sense, as it encapsulates where the book has been heading all along. Melancholia, after all, is a defining essence of Martí as icon, a complex of longing and regret that aligns perfectly with the cultural imaginary that has defined Cuban nationalism since its first full flowering in the Ten Years' War (1868–1878)—a formative event for the adolescent Martí—and certainly since his death in 1895. The nation's greatest hero, Martí emerges as the highest expression of a cultural imaginary both sublime in its aspirations and relentlessly, mawkishly morose in its expressions of it.

Bejel then proceeds to a necessarily brief but compelling genealogy of visual representations of Martí—a virtual gallery walk through the history of Martían melancholia—before concluding with an examination of two post-1990 paintings that exemplify the recent turn to “nonconformist representation of Martí’s heroic figure” (p. 108). It would be hard to imagine a more trenchant or more comprehensive analysis of the subject short of devoting an entire monograph to it.

Bejel concludes the book with a call for “resisting Cuban melancholia,” a process that involves producing and maintaining a critical distance from the Martían visual archive in order to pre-empt the “mystifying reverence [and] hegemonic aura” that it has accrued over so many decades. *José Martí: Images of Memory and Mourning* stands in the end as an exegesis of just such resistance, as Bejel does not let his obvious admiration and respect for Martí to stand in the way of his myth’s necessary demystification.

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Timothy Hyde

Constitutional Modernism: Architecture and Civil Society in Cuba, 1933–1959.

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013. 384 pp. (Paper US\$ 35.00)

Architectural historian and Harvard Graduate School of Design professor Timothy Hyde has compiled a tour de force in his examination of architectural and urban design practices that were socially construed when Cuban civil society and statesmen aimed to redefine the nation's identity. The book “explores the reciprocations of architecture and political circumstance in order to examine how architecture is incorporated within the developing course of civil society” (p. 2). The period of inquiry—1933 to 1959—was not one of political and social calm. Indeed, it was a turbulent and creative mix of dictatorships, democracy, stolen elections, and a pursuit of cosmopolitanism, particularly in Havana. Hyde argues that “constitutionalism produced a potent and decisive confluence of law and architecture [that is] the crucial theoretical framework to elucidate acts of design undertaken during this period of Cuba's history” (p. 5). A civil and professional revival of the arts and sciences involved key Cuban intellectuals and organizations such as Fernando Ortiz, Wifredo Lam, Nicolás Guillén, Amelia Peláez, Armando Romeu Jr., the Grupo Minorista, the Patronato Pro-Urbanismo, Mario Románach, Pedro Martínez Inclán, Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, and Jorge Mañach, among others, who set the stage for this new, modernist and thoroughly Cuban project.

Constitutionalism is conceptualized and operationalized as a mode of projection that governments use to express their identities—in this case, to help define *cubanidad*. The time frame captures the events on a broader civic project that witnessed an explosion in the arts, music, literature, journalism, poetry, and architecture, in which Cuba tries to emerge as a more sovereign nation and unshackle itself from the 1901 constitution that the Americans had written and used to constrain Cuba as a neo-colonial territory. Constitutions from the Weimar Republic (1919) and Spain (1931) bolster the discussion and final creation of Cuba's 1940 constitution. A new constellation of interdisciplinary, civic, and government efforts unleash a Cubanized version of international modern architectural styles and construction.

The book's eight chapters and epilogue constitute three main parts—Constitution, City, and Monument—which capture the spirit that better cities (through data-driven urban planning and careful urban design and construction) create better citizens. Extraterritorial projects such as the New Deal, CIAM (Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne), and the City Beautiful movement shape this expression of democracy, justice, modernity, and Cuban identity in Havana. Architecture and urban design are intended to lead to a sta-

ble civil society in Cuba during this period only to have this narrative mostly derailed with the onset of the 1959 revolution.

Part I, "Constitution," offers a broad historical and intellectual overview of the period. It unpacks the many narratives that modernity embraced in law, architecture, planning, and the creation of a modern nation state. Part II examines the 'city' through a detailed review of major public works and projects, master plans, and historic districts. Part III details the decades-long design and review of proposals for the José Martí monument and complex (in what is today the Plaza of the Revolution), and General Batista's vision for a new executive-branch complex called the Palacio de las Palmas.

While epilogues often tread on what-if scenarios or incomplete afterthoughts, Hyde avoids this pitfall. He argues that even though modernism carried on as a formal discourse and language for a few years following the revolution, it

was not a constitutional modernism; it did not assist or extend constitutionalism as an object or effect in Cuban society ... [it was] a sheer break, a rupture in the historical continuity that preceded it ... While Castro's famous claim that "history will absolve me" ... contains the grammatical structure of a future retrospection ... [it identifies a] political right with personal choice ... With the Cuban Revolution, the mode of constitutionalism became, like the Laws of the Indies before it, a historic relic.

pp. 299–300

Constitutional Modernism employs the term "modernism" in a catholic fashion. It is "not the sum of projects realized in modern style, nor the calculated actions of certain individuals, but rather a compound of institutional intentions, aesthetic modes, and instrumental techniques produced and proposed in response to the contemporaneous situations of Cuba" (p. 304, note 13). It is for this reason that this sweeping intellectual and architectural history of twentieth-century Cuba will benefit scholars in the fine arts, social sciences, and humanities.

The book will not find a strong readership at the undergraduate level, and will require guidance and context if used at the graduate level. Nor will the novice to Cuban Studies have the necessary background to understand how the historic project laid out by José Martí in the previous century evolved as it did into the middle of the next century. Indeed, parts of the writing are opaque and will obtrude on a general readership. I would also have welcomed an editor who insisted on shorter paragraphs. A few key publications on the notions of *cubanidad* are missing, and a few more pages regarding the way

the socialist government treated certain historic and modern buildings would have been beneficial to what is otherwise an excellent work. Nevertheless, the book epitomizes what the University of Minnesota Press is increasingly known for: theoretically informed books that tackle fascinating conceptual topics. The press should also be commended for such high-quality illustrations in both black and white and color, and all for such a reasonable price.

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Sun, Sex, and Socialism: Cuba in the German Imaginary. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012. xvi + 266 pp. (Cloth CAD 60.00)

Sun, Sex, and Socialism presents an ambitious and well-accomplished analysis of representations of revolutionary Cuba in German cultural production from the 1960s to the present. Through a competent close reading of a wide array of media—films, poems, travel narratives, essays, biographies, theater plays, novels and even a rum advertising campaign—Jennifer Ruth Hosek carefully examines the complex roles played by depictions of the socialist Caribbean island in different German political projects and nationalistic visions, especially in the two prereunification Germanies. She shows that, beyond official discourses of socialist friendship, German Democratic Republic (GDR) citizens often used images of Cuba to craft alternative ideals of a more enthusiastic, dynamic, independent, and nonaligned state socialism. The book also discusses how leftist activists in the pre-1989 Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) found in the socialist island a revolutionary subaltern nationalism that escaped both the conservative overtones of German nationalism and the problems of a less attractive Eastern European state socialism. As such, Cuba emerges in this book as an unlikely mirror that allowed Germans to change their own self-conceptions and domestic utopias.

Because of its heavy emphasis on the GDR, this book is, from a Cubanist point of view, an important contribution to the literature on the connections between the island and the Eurasian socialist bloc. It also brings a new perspective to cultural studies of the Cold War, challenging the dominant focus on the United States and the Soviet Union and analyzing representations of a southern socialist country in semiperipheral socialist and capitalist contexts. More broadly, it is a welcome statement on the cultural dimensions of transnationalism demonstrating that “strong colonial, migrant, and politico-economic ties are not necessary conditions for transnational connection” (p. 4). Hosek goes beyond the usual scholarly focus on northern orientalization and exoticization of the Global South to explore how northern intellectuals have eagerly looked for inspiration in southern emancipatory political movements. But this point is made without downplaying the exoticizing dimensions of these “German Cubas.” One of Hosek’s greatest accomplishments is precisely to show how visions of a sexualized tropical island have intertwined with revolutionary and emancipatory utopias—that is, how “sun and sex” have helped imagine a more liberating socialism.

Following an introduction that presents the book’s main arguments, Chapter 1 analyzes Germany’s post-1989 fascination with Cuba. This is mainly a story

of persisting differences between eastern and western Germany, as exemplified by its comparison of films produced in the two regions. Hosek reads Wim Wender's *Buena Vista Social Club* as a metaphoric celebration of German reunification that contrasts with the perspective of two movies made in contemporary eastern Germany. One of them portrays Cuba as an idealized view of what a still-socialist GDR might have been today; the other narrates the romance between a German man and a Cuban woman as a metaphor for a German reunification that disempowers a feminized GDR. The following two chapters bring readers to the 1960s. Chapter 2 examines how GDR intellectuals in that period tended to portray a vibrant, energetic, and grassroots Cuban socialism as a counterpoint to their own mature, stable, and bureaucratic socialism, but evaluated them in different ways. For instance, whereas a 1962 film portrayed GDR socialist subjects as politically more advanced than their joyous Cuban counterparts, a 1963 novel looked to Cuban fledgling socialism as a source of enthusiasm for young GDR citizens devoid of emotional commitment to socialism. Both pieces used sexuality as a fundamental language through which to think Cuba and Germany, which contrasts to the less sexualized representation of Cuba that Chapter 3 documents in the 1960s FRG. This short chapter discusses how West Berlin radicals found in the Cuban Revolution a legitimate form of emancipatory nationalism as well as promising guerrilla tactics that they tried to adapt to their northern urban setting.

Chapter 4 narrates a shift toward political disillusionment in both Germanies' appreciation of Cuba throughout the 1970s. While FRG authors went from seeing the Cuban state as an embodiment of legitimate political violence to criticizing governmental control in both capitalism and socialism, GDR producers replaced their visions of a democratic non-aligned Cuban state socialism with a consumerist gaze that portrayed the island as a sexualized exotic location. Chapter 5 analyzes German—mainly GDR—representations of two Cuba-related transnational revolutionary figures: Che Guevara and Tania *la Guerrillera*. Official GDR representations tried to stabilize these figures as youthful and romantic socialist heroes, but their biographies and filmic references, according to Hosek, enabled nonconformist readings that offered the GDR public “vicarious pleasures and alternative lifestyles even in tension with socialist values” (p. 160), especially related to sexual and travel freedoms.

Hosek's dizzying kaleidoscope of close readings sometimes makes the reader lose sight of the book's central arguments, but it has a clear overall message: *German* cultural producers have repeatedly imagined Cuba in order to recreate and transform *German* national imaginations. This reveals the power of nationalism to frame transnational connections, a point that Hosek does not make explicit. But such a message also means that Cubans play an extremely

limited role either as authors or receivers of these cultural products, and in their rare appearances in the volume they have far less agency than German actors. Therefore, the argument of Cuba's (or the South's) supposed "influence" on Germany (or the North)—posited in the introduction and epilogue as a central contribution of the book (e.g., pp. 4, 180)—is not demonstrated at all. However, the book makes even more important and sophisticated statements about northern imaginations of Cuba and the Caribbean, and on nationalism and transnationalism in general, and will be of great interest to students of those topics.

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Tom Astley

Outside the Revolution: Everything: A Redefinition of Left-wing Identity in Contemporary Cuban Music Making. Winchester, U.K.: Zero Books, 2012. ix +106 pp. (Paper US\$14.95)

In *Outside the Revolution: Everything*, Tom Astley looks at contemporary Cuban music through the work of punk band *Porno para Ricardo*, rapper Raudel Collazo (a.k.a. Escuadrón Patriota), and singer-songwriter Pedro Luis Ferrer. He distinguishes a major theme in their work, which is, in fact, the major obsession in contemporary Cuban cultural production: the redefinition of Cubanness and national identity to meet the challenges of globalization and postsocialism. By claiming the means of cultural production from the state (*Porno para Ricardo*), redefining the meaning of “the people” (Escuadrón Patriota), and negotiating the local, the national, and the global in musical terms (Pedro Luis Ferrer), these artists exemplify the ongoing process of cultural change in the country.

Astley then concludes that “by working outside the Revolution” these musicians “restate and reclaim a left-wing that is democratic, representational, and forward-facing” (p. 90). This statement is problematic. Although *Porno para Ricardo*’s opposition to the Cuban government is notorious, Astley presents no evidence to support the claim that they are left-oriented, unless we conceive all resistance as intrinsically leftist. On the other hand, given his contention that these musicians produce discourses outside the hegemony of the Revolution, it would have been interesting to know how the Cuban state has dealt with them, especially because the three are differently positioned along the lines of criticism. While the punk band *Porno para Ricardo* has built open alliances with political dissidents inside Cuba and their lyrics bluntly mock the leaders of the Cuban Revolution, Pedro Luis Ferrer—despite a long period of censorship in the 1980s and 1990s—currently performs in official venues and has always resorted to satire and metaphorical language to convey coded criticism. The contrasts in tone and discursive strategies show how these musicians react differently, choosing to reject or negotiate the revolutionary space dictated by Fidel Castro in his 1961 discourse known as Words to the Intellectuals: “Within the Revolution, anything goes; against the Revolution, nothing.” This quote, which appears at the beginning of the book and informs its title, set the cultural policy of the Cuban Revolution early on and, consequently, deserved some discussion in the text.

It would have been fruitful to see some engagement with a growing literature on Cuban contemporary music beyond the books by Sujatha Fernandes, Robin Moore, and Vincenzo Perna. Joaquín Borges Triana (2007, 2009) and Susan Thomas (2005), in particular, have contributed to the understanding of

Cuban musicians' use of global and diasporic frameworks fused with Cuban traditional genres to enact a more complex national identity, a claim at the core of Astley's study.¹ This is not a purely academic matter. The dialogue with this literature would certainly have pushed forward many of the arguments Astley essays in the book while compelling him to position himself more clearly in relation to ongoing debates on Cuban music. In general, more engagement with the current literature on Cuban Studies would have allowed him to better contextualize many of the issues—such as blackness and race, migration, U.S.–Cuban relations and cultural policies—he briefly discusses in the first part of the book.

The book's most valuable contribution is the analysis itself of the music produced by these artists—appearing in the second part of the text—which provides interesting insights. Astley argues that *Porno para Ricardo's* music is deeply invested in the home studio because of the empowerment that comes from producing independently from the state. In the carefully constructed soundproofed space of the home studio—which is itself an extravaganza in noisy Havana—the band (re)creates a “noise” that cannot be monitored by the state. Astley goes on to illustrate through textual analysis how Escuadrón Patriota constructs Cuban identity as a space where difference can co-exist as opposed to the state's insistence on a unified nation (p. 19). At the same time, in this rapper's discourse, “the people” is no longer the protagonist of mass demonstrations and political campaigns as it appears in propaganda; rather, it is defined by shared experiences of “subjugation” (p. 67) and everyday life—a framework I have also found in the rap of Los Aldeanos, with whom Escuadrón Patriota has collaborated (Gámez Torres 2013). Finally, Astley depicts Pedro Luis Ferrer's relation with traditional Cuban music, in particular his modernization and hybridization of less popular rural genres such as *changüi*, not as a matter of revival or preservation but as a result of his intention to open up “the possibilities of what can be considered part of a Cuban soundscape” (p. 79). The political implications of many of the book's arguments and findings are intriguing and worth exploring in the future.

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1 This is not exclusive to the Cuban context; see for instance Motti Regev's comparative study of pop rock in Israel and Argentina (2007).

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Suki John

Contemporary Dance in Cuba: Técnica Cubana as Revolutionary Movement.

Jefferson NC: McFarland, 2012. x + 221 pp. (Paper US\$ 38.00)

Not long after the Cuban Revolution, the innovative choreographer Ramiro Guerra formed, under the aegis of the new state, the Conjunto Nacional de Danza Moderna, a contemporary dance company that, like the national folkloric and ballet companies, sought to project a Cuban identity to the people of its country and to the world. Guerra had studied ballet in Cuba and modern dance in New York with masters like Martha Graham and José Limón, but he wanted the company to reflect a particularly Cuban way of moving and a Cuban musicality. Choosing Cuban dancers of varying professional and racial backgrounds and associates with modern dance backgrounds from the United States and Mexico, Guerra sought to extract varied Cuban ways of moving and merge them into modern dance choreographies with Cuban import. Together with his associates, and later dancemakers in the company that is now called Danza Contemporánea de Cuba (and offshoot modern dance companies), he evolved a teaching technique, the *técnica cubana*, that combines a basis in modern dance with ballet and Cuban folkloric elements; it allows dancers and choreographers who master it great flexibility and virtuoso possibilities that do indeed reflect a special *cubanidad*.

Suki John, a choreographer, dance writer, and assistant professor at Texas Christian University, is well placed to write about how contemporary dance is made in Cuba. She visited Cuba in 1973, returned for her first look at *técnica cubana* in 1988, and since 1992 has choreographed for Narciso Medina's company in Havana and also for Danza Contemporánea and the Ballet Nacional. *Contemporary Dance in Cuba* puts in place the social, political, historical, and dance contexts for Cuba's important, but too little known contemporary dance-making. More than that, amplified by David Garten's astute photographs, it offers a personal, vivid look at Cuban society as, despite myriad difficulties, it makes vibrant, significant contemporary dance.

John alternates background information of many types in regular text, enough to make sense of the evolution of contemporary dance in Cuba, with more personal accounts in italics that show her intense and expressive involvement with Cuban everyday and artistic life. Having been to Cuba in 1988 when creative work flourished and people ate substantially, she is shocked on returning in 1992, to choreograph for Medina's company, to find how difficult daily life has become in the Special Period, after the end of the Soviet Union and its subsidies to Cuba. Everyone makes do with improvisation and frustration. Some plan to leave and some actually do so. Medina manages to keep his

company going and, with trips abroad to perform, teaching tourists, and continued renown as an artist, finds himself in a better position than many. John returns several times to work with his company and others.

Contemporary Dance in Cuba gives a good foundation for understanding Cuban modern dance, but it is not comprehensive. John discusses some of Medina's work and gives his solo, *La Espera*, the most detailed analysis of any dance in the book. She did not appreciate this piece about waiting for a bus in Havana when she first saw it at a dance festival in Finland in 1991, but understood it well after she experienced the trials of the Special Period. She views the film *Historia de un Ballet (Suite Yoruba)*, made of and about that seminal work by Ramiro Guerra in 1962 and describes it; she also recounts information about Guerra's work and life from both her research and her interviews with him. She interviews Alicia Alonso and discusses what makes Cuban ballet distinctive. She describes less about Eduardo Rivero's very beautiful 1971 ritual dance, *Súlkary*, Danza Contemporánea's signature piece, than about its mixed reception from New York's none-too-perceptive dance critics when Danza presented it at its first season in New York in 2011. *Súlkary*, John says "is one of a handful of classic modern dances that exemplify *técnica cubana*. Guerra's *Suite Yoruba*, Medina's *Metamorfosis*, and Marianela Boán's *Chorus Perpetuus* are also considered part of that canon" (p. 98). But Boán and other contemporary Cuban choreographers of note are only mentioned; their work is not explored.

Similarly, in writing about Cuba's African-derived spiritual traditions, she merely mentions Kongo-Angolan, Arará, and Carabalí, but goes into detail about the orishas of Santería and their importance in Cuban dance. The rhythms of the orishas are played, for instance, as part of the *técnica cubana* classes John describes. In her discussion of Cuba's manifold folkloric dances, she singles out rumba, though she also offers an interesting discussion of the mixture of African movement, Spanish influences, and European embraced social dance position that led to Cuba's exciting, sensual, and always evolving array of social dance.

There is an occasional disconnect between the notes and the bibliography—not all the note entries are in the latter. And John's chapter in *Caribbean Dance from Abakuá to Zouk: How Movement Shapes Identity*, a book I edited in 2005, is mistitled "Cuban Modern Dance" when it is actually called "The Técnica Cubana."

If Suki John does not tell you everything you might want to know about Cuban contemporary dance and the technique behind it, what she does offer is a picture of Cuban life, people, and creativity revolving around making modern dance that is alive to all its pleasures, frustrations, and contradictions.

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Guy Baron

Gender in Cuban Cinema: From the Modern to the Postmodern. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2011. vi + 326 pp. (Paper US\$69.95)

Gender in Cuban Revolutionary film has been an insistent topic of scholarship in work on Cuban cinema over the past thirty years, not least because Cuban filmmakers have—in keeping with the state sponsored support of filmmaking as an engaged, political, and most importantly national activity—repeatedly explored questions of gender in a revolutionary society. The work of Marvin D'Lugo (1993), Catherine Benamou (1995, 1999), Julianne Burton-Carvajal (1986, 1993), and others has examined the diverse ways Cuban films such as *Lucía* (Humberto Solás, 1968), *Retrato de Teresa / Portrait of Teresa* (Pastor Vega, 1978), *De cierta manera / One Way or Another* (Sara Gómez, 1978), *Hasta cierto punto / Up to a Point* (Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, 1980), and *Lejanía / Far Away* (Jesús Díaz, 1986) have explored the representation of women and issues of gendered spectatorship.

Gender in Cuban Cinema inserts itself into this field with a welcome addition to the various perspectives of D'Lugo, et al. Guy Baron looks at issues of gender and gender relations in films produced between 1974 and 1990 (*De cierta manera*, *Hasta cierto punto*, and *Retrato de Teresa*, as well as *¡Plaff! [o demasiado miedo a la vida] / Plaff! Or too Afraid of Life* by Juan Carlos Tabío [1988] and *Mujer transparente / Transparent Woman* by Hector Veitía, Mayra Segura, Mayra Vilasis, Mario Crespo & Ana Rodríguez [1990]), arguing that these “developed along a progressive path from expressions of the modern to expressions of the postmodern” (p. 2). He covers topics such as *machismo*, female sexuality, and the figure of the mother and borrows analytical tools from Anglo feminist film and cultural theory (Laura Mulvey, Julia Lesage, Elizabeth Cowie, Annette Kuhn, E. Ann Kaplan, Mary Ann Doane, B. Ruby Rich, Judith Butler, and Molly Haskell). One of the most useful aspects of this book for those researching and teaching Cuban cinema are the excellent theoretical and contextual introductions to the development of Cuban cinema in the period 1974–1990, to broader cultural production in Cuba, and to the gender debate in Cuba “as a whole.” These provide a broad basis from which to understand Baron’s ultimate thesis—that during this period Cuban cinema covered shifts from the “acceptance and support of the Marxist modernizing revolutionary project to a postmodern critical questioning of that project” (p. 45). *De cierta manera*, at the beginning of the period analyzed, is presented as the paradigm of Marxist-feminist cinema in the way its counter-cinematic style seeks to raise (and change) the spectator’s awareness of gender issues along the lines of Revolutionary aims and objectives. *Mujer transparente*, on the other hand, which

comes at the end of the period (coincident with the fall of socialism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and the resulting period of financial difficulty and disenchantment in Cuba), reveals through its fragmented, five-story anthology film form, a postmodern questioning of previous Marxist inspired modernizing values.

Baron's marrying of textual analyses of key films of the Cuban canon with broader theoretical paradigms is another of the book's strengths. I would recommend in particular the analogies he draws between the larger ideological and cultural project of Cuban cinema in its first twenty years—articulated in veteran Cuban filmmaker and theorist Julio García Espinosa's seminal essay "Towards an Imperfect Cinema" (1997 [orig. 1969]) and illustrated by Gómez's *De cierta manera*—and that of feminist film criticism as expounded in Laura Mulvey's equally seminal essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975). Baron brings these theorists together to underscore the contiguities of aims of feminist filmmaking and Cuban filmmaking, and to show how both are attempting, in their own ways, to break down the codes of classical filmmaking.

Baron's book makes an invaluable contribution to the field of Cuban cinema studies and is a must read for any researcher working in the area.

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Ileana M. Rodríguez-Silva

Silencing Race: Disentangling Blackness, Colonialism, and National Identities in Puerto Rico. Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. viii + 320 pp. (Cloth US\$90.00)

March 22, 2013 marked the 140th anniversary of the abolition of slavery in Puerto Rico, typically an occasion for commemorative events regarding the question of race. Nevertheless, during the rest of the year, the topic is generally given short shrift and regarded as foreign to the notion of *puertorriqueñidad*, which is based on a prevailing mythos of a harmonious and racially-mixed society. This habitual neglect of the “antinational” topic of race is precisely the focus of Rodríguez-Silva’s book, *Silencing Race*. As she states in her introduction, “Individual and collective silences about African-derived cultural heritage, ancestry, and history are intricately linked to Puerto Ricans’ denial of racialized domination as a fact of life” (pp. 2–3).

Rodríguez-Silva reconstructs “transformative” historical moments between the 1870s and 1910s when glossing over racialized boundaries became politically expedient in the building of a cohesive Puerto Rican national identity. Her primary goal is to reveal how silence and alternate means such as coded “idioms of labor” were used, consciously and unconsciously, to avoid explicit discourse regarding race. Via painstaking analysis of census records, civil and criminal records, newspaper articles, manifestos, public speeches, private correspondence, and works of fiction, she demonstrates how the narrative of racial fusion and the strategic erasure of indigenous and African narratives have veiled the history of racial struggle in Puerto Rico and made it difficult for Afro-Puerto Ricans to collectively denounce discrimination.

The introduction, entitled “Racial (dis)harmony in Puerto Rico,” establishes Rodríguez-Silva’s primary thesis. The rest of the book is divided into two parts, the first dealing with the final years of the Spanish colonial regime and the second with the early years of U.S. colonial rule.

Chapter 1, “Becoming a free worker in post-emancipation Puerto Rico,” shows how creole elites in Puerto Rico constructed a discourse of labor that obscured racial considerations and how freed slaves learned to utilize this discourse to their own advantage. Chapter 2, “Liberal Elites’ Writings: The Racial Dissection of the Puerto Rican Specimen,” analyzes the works of Manuel Zeno Gandía, Francisco del Valle Atilés, and Salvador Brau during the 1880s and 1890s to trace the way the liberal creole elites rearticulated their own whiteness and superiority by “reforming” and policing the freed slaves’ morality, work ethic, sexual activity, and hygiene.

Chapter 3, "Race and the modernization of Ponce after slavery," looks at the development of late nineteenth-century Ponce, a city to which many freed people gravitated after abolition. Rodríguez-Silva explains how the criminalization of vagrants and prostitutes was an indirect way of controlling the black population. She also clarifies how the liberal leaders utilized their past abolitionist involvement to promote an image of "grateful" *libertos* who owed their gains to the kindness of the liberals.

Chapter 4, "U.S. rule and the volatile topic of race in the public political sphere," probes the effects of the U.S. invasion and the attempts made to introduce a North American racial framework into public discourse on the island. Chapter 5, "Racial silencing and the organizing of Puerto Rican labor," explores struggles within the ranks of organized labor in the early twentieth century and the "muting" of race talk in order to develop class consciousness and solidarity among the peasantry and urban working class and mend internal divisions among the existing unions. Rodríguez-Silva does not pull her punches when she states that "the working class organizations' practice of silence did not contest the creole elites' strategies for whitening the population and did not challenge the racial hierarchies that continue marginalizing large sectors of the population" (p. 185).

Chapter 6, "Deflecting Puerto Rican blackness," considers the cultural constructions of the "*raza iberoamericana*" and the white-skinned, highland *jíbaro*, both of which linked the island's culture to Spain and Latin America, rather than to the other (blacker) Caribbean islands. It also examines the vociferous 1912 debate over U.S. citizenship against the backdrop of the black rebellion in the Cuban Republic, which was taken as a cautionary tale for what could happen if Puerto Rico sought independence. Finally, it examines the racial underpinnings of the public health campaigns with their eugenic orientation. In the concluding chapter, "The Heavy Weight of Silence," Rodríguez-Silva holds up Luis Palés Matos's controversial "black verses" as a key interruption of the silence about race, but also shows how this poetry was later co-opted by the Commonwealth school system to serve as one of the few mentions of African culture in the curriculum.

Silencing Race is a thorough, albeit repetitive, treatment of the strategic suppression of racialized discourse in a multiracial society. Rodríguez-Silva contributes creative interpretations of well-known documentary data along with new archival discoveries and also demonstrates how gender struggles intersected with race politics. While she takes chronological liberties, hopping back and forth in time, her insights into the complex interweaving of political strategies, reformulated social identities, and occasional public accusations of racism in Puerto Rico make her work a valuable historical and sociological resource.

The book is recommended reading for anyone interested in the historical development of race, class, gender, and identity in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean more generally or the effects of double colonial subjugation on a national psyche. It would also be of considerable interest to scholars or students working in the area of critical discourse analysis.

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Jorge Duany

Blurred Borders: Transnational Migration between the Hispanic Caribbean and the United States. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. xv + 284 pp. (Paper US\$ 29.95)

Blurred Borders is a brisk, balanced, and well-informed set of essays on migration from the Spanish-speaking Caribbean to the United States. Jorge Duany includes material from his wide-ranging research, much of which has been published previously, but the volume offers more than just a compilation of his “greatest hits.” The essays build on the diversity of his research interests to construct a novel comparative approach to migration flows that are usually examined in distinct national frames.

Duany introduces the essays with three newly written chapters. First, he surveys the theoretical literature by social scientists working on contemporary migration from the Spanish-speaking Caribbean. Next, he outlines the key historical trajectories of each of the three migrant streams, with a dual focus on demographic trends and legal and political contexts. These two chapters offer a synthetic view that is not only useful for setting up the scholarly comparison raised in the book but also ideally suited for the classroom. There is no textbook available that offers this material in one place, or presents it in as complete and lucid a fashion. Next, Duany lays out a thematic system for organizing comparisons among these groups, including their location and relative concentration in the United States, social indicators, use of panethnic categories such as Latino or Hispanic, and racial identification on the U.S. Census.

At the heart of the book's argument is the idea that transnational or diasporic ties to the homeland, of varying intensities and types, can serve as the most important variable for comparing the three cases. Although respectful of scholars who contest the representation of the Dominican Republic as relentlessly transnational, “deterritorialized,” and mobile, Duany presents a view (fairly well accepted among migration studies scholars) that Dominican ethnic formation in the United States is strongly characterized by homeland ties. For him, the Dominican Republic represents a classic case of what Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller have called the “transnational nation-state.” Since the late 1970s, a multiparty system has developed in which all major contenders for power depend heavily on overseas migrants for fundraising and organizational support. The Dominican government has pursued policies intended to build ties between migrants and the homeland, including the extension of dual nationality in the 1990s. Partly in response to these efforts Dominican migrants, as a group, demonstrate high levels of political engagement in homeland politics, traveling frequently to and from the home-

land, engaging in extremely high levels of international calling and remittances, and maintaining dense networks of family and business across borders.

In contrast to the Dominican Republic, the case of Puerto Rico is often excluded from analyses of transnationalism among contemporary migrants. Because Puerto Rico is a territory belonging to the United States and because Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens by birth, Puerto Rican migration is not international migration, and therefore not generally construed as transnational. In previous work Duany has argued convincingly that Puerto Rico, with neither a sovereign government nor a mass independence movement, has the salient attributes of nationhood: language, cultural distinction from the mainland, and a widespread sentiment of national belonging. Here he extends that argument to show that it also has some of the features of a transnational state, what he calls a "transnational colonial state." In a sparkling case study he shows that between the 1940s and the 1970s, the Puerto Rican government used the Migration Division in order to promote migration through the Farm Labor Program as strategy for combatting unemployment (and disaffection), but also with the purpose of "giving voice" to its "migrant citizens." This had the effect of making the Puerto Rican government one of the primary social and political referents for migrants in the period, the institution that they turned to for legal help, social assistance, complaint, and protest. Forty years later, Duany notes, Puerto Ricans remain "bifocal," but are less likely than Dominicans to own property in the homeland, to travel frequently, or to preserve dense family networks. This is owed to the decline in intensity of transnational practices in the second generation. Transfer payments from the U.S. government also mitigate the use of remittances as a survival strategy among the poor.

Duany turns next to the case of Cuban migration. Because of the unique legal, political, and economic trajectories of the immigrants who arrived between the Revolution in 1959 and the mid-1970s, Cuban migrants are often viewed (and portray themselves) as exceptional, unlike other Latin American immigrants in most respects, including their preservation of transnational ties with the island. Cuba is the classic example of the "disinterested and denouncing state," antagonistic to overseas migrants. As a result, while Cuban Americans construct their ethnicity based strongly on symbolic ties to the homeland, they experience a definitive break with contemporary political and social life in Cuba. Duany summarizes the excellent recent research on Cuban migration to describe the evolution toward a "less disinterested and denouncing state" since the late 1970s, changing demographics and political attitudes among migrants, and the marked rise in visits to the island by Cubans living abroad, remittances, and telephone traffic.

Several of the chapters fit less than perfectly into the overall flow of the argument. And there are places where scholars may wish that Duany had allotted himself more space to work through some of the themes that he quickly summarizes. For instance, in previous work he has provided a more nuanced interpretation of migrant racial identifications in the United States, and their difficult-to-parse relationships with popular racial identities and modes of racial classification in the Hispanic Caribbean. Similarly, one might wish he had circled back throughout the text to the distinctions among the various concepts of transnationalism, nationalism at a distance, and diaspora, being clearer about ways that his evidence supports one or the other. Yet the purpose of this text is less to give exhaustive or conclusive answers than to provide a comparative framing and begin to sketch out a set of thematic questions. This Duany accomplishes to great effect. *Blurred Borders* seems certain to become a key reference for graduate students planning research on migration in the region, and a widely adopted text for teaching undergraduate students.

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Mérida M. Rúa

A Grounded Identity: Making New Lives in Chicago's Puerto Rican Neighborhoods.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. xviii + 234 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

Chicago Illinois looms large in the American imagination as the center for industrial expansion in the Midwest. Its steel mills dominated city skylines and clogged the air of nearby Gary and East Chicago, sinewy steel towns in Northern Indiana, once home to the Miami and Shawnee peoples. The city's meat-packing mills attracted workers from as far away as Mexico, the East Coast's immigrant shores, and the struggling coal-laden towns of the Alleghenies. Industry's promises wrestled farmers from humble villages dotting the western plains; but its brave assurances often led to crowded tenements, hunger, and the lash of cold, winter winds. Yet, each new group in the "windy city" helped change the landscape dramatically for generations to come, adding festivals, mingling languages, creating cultural sites that made the city pulse with vitality. Chicago emerged in the twentieth century as one of the most dynamic, diverse, and racially segregated cities in the country.

Path-breaking scholars, such as Zaragoza Vargas, whose *Proletarians of the North* (1993) heralded new transnational studies on the vitality of Latinos in the labor marketplaces of urban Mid-America, showed how these new industrial recruits imaginatively assimilated into new communal structures, creatively molded their social networks, and welcomed others from home. Studies on Puerto Ricans in the Midwest have been sparse; and none offer as intricate an analysis of labor networks and community formations as Vargas's panoramic work. The paucity of studies on Latinos in the Midwest, especially of its Puerto Rican diaspora, faced long-term stagnation as scholars focused principally on the Eastern Seaboard's "traditional barrios" in urban New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Except for early landmark studies such as Felix Padilla's *Puerto Rican Chicago* (1987) and the gender studies of Marixsa Alicea (1997, 2001), who captured the complex migratory patterns and community development of Puerto Ricans in Chicago, the fabric of everyday life experiences of Boricuas in the "windy city" remained largely ignored.

More recently, Puerto Rican scholars have engaged in producing, from the vantage point of their personal experiences, anthropological research that engages readers in an understanding of identity negotiations, the challenges of urbanization, and the growth of gentrification within Chicago's Latino communities. Some, like Mérida Rúa whose identity is rooted in Chicago, offer insight not only into the daily lives of her community's inhabitants but also into the difficulties of producing research that directly responds to the needs of the community itself. Rúa's *A Grounded Identity* not only adds an important

chapter to the evolution of intricate social networks that encapsulate her community but also to an understanding of the struggle for recognition and appreciation within the academic community at large.

Rúa pays homage to those whose work in community organizing began in ways similar to her own—as aspiring intellectuals in graduate programs assisted by family networks and supported by established scholars. She begins by paying tribute to anthropologist Elena Padilla who, as a graduate student at the University of Chicago in the 1940s, collected testimonies of Puerto Rican domestic workers to encourage equity in pay. The first section, echoing her previous role as editor of *Latino Urban Ethnography and the Work of Elena Padilla* (2011), describes the declining economic conditions in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico that led to widespread migration to New York City and, later, to Chicago. In a book divided into a prologue, a narrative of Padilla's ethnological research agendas and her own, and an essay on methodology, Rúa offers six chapters, none of which are intricately tied to each other; rather they serve as “stand alone” pieces within a chain of memories, fieldwork, and ruminations of varying brightness and circumspection. The trail of information has promising moments, but, leaping too often into landscapes of familiarity, it lacks discrete data on the historical growth of Latino communities in the region and a critical distance to overcome issues of authenticity when the researcher emerges as a major player in a personal network of informants. Writing through the vantage point of storytelling (the foundation of Critical Race Theory), she would need to establish incisively her goals, boundaries, and methodology at the very beginning. In not doing so, Rúa disappoints critical readers who can become lost in “an episodic pattern of constant movement” (p. 56) between topical explorations.

Her tableau is Chicago's Near North Side, a landscape that resembles, to a large extent, Gina Pérez's neighborhood in *The Near Northwest Side Story* (2004). The two authors explore similar themes—the origins of displacement, transnational cultural politics, and the negative effects of gentrification. Whereas Pérez delves deeply into survival strategies in Chicago and Puerto Rico's insular communities, Rúa freely interlaces observations and commentary on community activism, the salience of interracial relationships, and the influence of friends and acquaintances on identity formation. In her first section, she provides an overview of the denial of citizenship rights to Puerto Ricans living on the “mainland” during the time of the Black “great migration” to the Midwest. She explains that while Puerto Ricans were U.S. citizens, perceptions among policy makers and their endemic social services offices kept many of them off relief rolls while encouraging exploitation. Her account of interlaced histories among African Americans and Puerto Ricans helps us

to understand inter-ethnic affiliations among Chicago's politicians, precisely community leaders like Luis Gutiérrez who rose from city alderman during Harold Washington's mayorship to a long-term Congressional seat (and whose photo appears among many others in the text).

Rúa, who lived in Palmer Square while carrying out the graduate research from which *A Grounded Identidad* sprang, situates social rituals at the axis of interracial accommodations. Along with community organizing, ethnic festivities, parades, picnics, a Latino press, and shared commemorations of lives touched by rapid social change, she chronicles family bonding. Although unwieldy, *A Grounded Identidad* reminds us of the power of family in creating transformative identities in a highly segregated city of the Midwest, an area in great need of illuminative academic study.

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Amy L. Paugh

Playing with Languages: Children and Change in a Caribbean Village. New York: Berghahn Books, 2012. xii + 250 pp. (Cloth us\$90.00)

This text is an important one in several particulars. First, it describes the sociolinguistic situation on the island of Dominica, which has never before received a full text, notwithstanding the groundbreaking work of Pauline Christie (e.g., 1990, 1994). Second, it is concerned to show, in a data-driven way, how children are effective forces in the processes of language revitalization, development, and change. Third, it demonstrates the significant role of play in children's development of adult codes, which may, in other contexts, be censured.

While the role of children has been previously discussed in relation to language continuity and change, there has been considerable debate over the matter. William Labov (1989) viewed the child as a language historian, while Derek Bickerton (1989) and Noam Chomsky (2006), with different emphases, saw the child as a language creator and innovator. In another Caribbean context (Youssef 2010), I have argued that children are social beings, learning to balance the varieties of their exposure in order to fit into the social milieux through which they pass and developing varilingual competence, which allows for the development of systematic code-mixing in the very process of language acquisition.

Playing with Languages contributes to that discussion by showing how, in the Dominica context, rural children use both the Patwa of their elders and English-related varieties to which they are exposed, since they acquire, through their socialization, an awareness not only of language but of the affect entailed in using each variety. Amy Paugh points to the critical importance of language socialization in establishing indexicality. She argues that children acquire not just linguistic structure but also awareness of the ways in which language indexes social meaning according to context (p. 14). She notes that learning the ways in which emotion, power, and identity are conveyed is a critical part of language socialization such that features of lexicon, grammar, and discourse may all be absorbed for differential use according to context. She points to the critical role of code-switching and identifies a range of functions that it fulfills including, for children, its role in play, the creation of distance or closeness, humor or power, and, in an interesting way, its use to revoice adult talk. Given this complex situation she is able to demonstrate that children contribute both to language maintenance and to language shift. While they may be chastised for using Patwa, they hear their elders use it in particular contexts and are even admonished to use items contextually themselves, thus maintaining the language even though English is the preferred code for schooling and advance-

ment, in public contexts. They are socialized to curse in Patwa, even while being directed verbally toward English. In addition they observe adults' use of Patwa and translate that into their own play scenarios, clearly embracing it as an empowering private code, still valorized strongly in the community despite public censure.

A drawback to the study is its failure to engage with another code the children use. By insisting on referring to English as the major public code, Paugh simplifies the Francophone Caribbean linguistic picture in a way that is common but increasingly inaccurate for societies like Dominica and Saint Lucia in which a Patwa coexists with Standard English but also with a midway variety, a mesolectal Anglophone creole. This variety draws for its structure on the Patwa or French Creole and on English for its lexicon. Creole structures are calqued onto English words (pp. 92–95). While Paugh alludes to Christie's recognition of this code as an emergent creole (1990, 1994), she chooses not to explore the alternation with this code much further. It is likely the main lingua franca of the communities in which the children grow and the main vehicle of communication even in the school setting, but ostensibly school is the domain of English. I appreciate Paugh's main focus on Patwa and the value of her book in defining its functions and contexts of use, but it would have been useful for her to analyze this other variety more closely also. Without that focus, there remains an inaccuracy in her description because we do not learn the extent to which children alternate with the mesolectal Anglophone creole as opposed to English.

The study is ground-breaking in focus and coverage. It is based on a longitudinal ethnographic investigation conducted between 1996 and 1998 and again for four short periods in the first decade of the twenty-first century. It centers on the village of Penville and on six families in which language socialization was documented in each case for children aged between two and four. As those children and their parents were part of dense social networks, the wider community and its practices also became a part of the study which was recorded (both video and audio) to ensure clarity and allow the speech of the informants to be accurately documented. The children were recorded monthly and the families treated the researcher as a friend. Periodic recordings were also made in the schools the children attended. All this was supplemented by ethnographic notes on community life and social interaction, making for the production of an authentic text on language and life in the community under study, significant for its focus on play as a vehicle for the transmission of language. If there was a little too much focus on features that contrasted sharply with the researcher's own background this is perhaps an aspect of ethnographic research that is difficult to avoid.

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Giselle Rampaul & Geraldine Elizabeth Skeete (eds.)

The Child and the Caribbean Imagination. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2012. ix + 226 pp. (Paper US\$ 35.00)

The figure of the child is a prominent one in Caribbean fiction. Indeed, it is striking how many of the canonical works of the region's literature are novels of childhood and adolescence—George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin*, Joseph Zobel's *La rue Case-Nègres*, Merle Hodge's *Crick Crack, Monkey*, and Jamaica Kincaid's *Annie John* spring immediately to mind, for example. Added to this, as the editors of *The Child and the Caribbean Imagination* observe, is the key role of children in the region's "folk tales, songs and games" (p. 1). And yet despite "the long-standing interest in representing the child in different kinds of media, the issues surrounding Caribbean childhood have not been given sufficient academic attention" (p. 1). This new collection of twelve essays sets out to remedy that blind-spot, with contributions from scholars working in a range of disciplines, including literary criticism, linguistics, and education. The result is a diverse, stimulating volume that promises not only to expand the burgeoning, if still relatively small field of Caribbean childhood studies, but also to open up new perspectives within existing areas of critical enquiry in the humanities and social sciences.

The collection is divided into four sections: "Discourse and Representation," "Unstable Identities," "Language Development," and "Pedagogy." The six essays that comprise the first two sections are concerned primarily with the literary representation of children. Sandra Pouchet Paquet's "Towards a Poetics of Childhood" considers a variety of childhood narratives from across the Caribbean, including Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin*, Patrick Chamoiseau's *Chemin-d'école*, and Judith Ortiz Cofer's *Silent Dancing*. Focusing on the theme of age and innocence, Pouchet Paquet explores childhood as "a distinct and separate state of being that is nonetheless intimately related to the adult's way of seeing and knowing" (p. 14). She is particularly concerned with the narrative tension this engenders between the "innocent" state of childhood and the reconstruction of this period at a later date from the vantage point of adult "wisdom."

The ambivalence surrounding the representation of childhood experience is a theme common to all the essays in these two sections. Thus, Barbara Lalla, in her consideration of Olive Senior's short stories and poetry, examines how Senior, in a tale such as "The Lizardy Man and His Lady," conveys a child's attempts at self-construction or self-retrieval through narrative discourse, juxtaposing this with an adult viewpoint to produce a cacophony of voices in the text. Ryan Durgasingh, meanwhile, provides a suggestive analysis

of V.S. Naipaul's *Miguel Street*, highlighting the powerlessness of the novel's child narrator, who despite functioning as the consciousness through which events are relayed, is marginalized in such a way as to become an instrument "to carry out everyone's agenda but his own" (p. 61). Jennifer Rahim's essay tackles Michael Anthony's novel *The Year in San Fernando*, revisiting as it does so the controversy that erupted between the critics Kenneth Ramchand and Sylvia Wynter in the late 1960s. Rahim highlights Ramchand's concept of the child in Anthony's text as an "open state of consciousness," arguing that this is vital to the "subtly managed allegorical framework" the novel deploys, with Anthony presenting the protagonist Francis "both as a sign of the chronic psychosocial dislocation of a debilitating colonial order and of the new consciousness /nation he visualizes" (p. 45). Likewise, Giselle Rampaul's analysis of Joyce Gittens's short story "I Remember Pampalam" considers how the child can be mobilized as a sign of postcolonial possibility yet at the same time, because of the way the child character is colonized by his or her own narrating adult self, figure the continued entrapments of imperialism. Similarly concerned with the symbolic resonance of the child as a marginal character, Geraldine Skeete's essay probes the analogies that might be drawn between the relations linking children and adults, heterosexuals and homosexuals, and the short story and the novel as literary forms.

The two essays that comprise the third section of the volume focus on the ways in which Caribbean children contribute to the development of language and discourse. Ben Brathwaite puts forward a fascinating argument concerning the linguistic features shared by signed and creole languages. One reason for such commonalities, he suggests, is the special role of children in the development of both. Kathy-Ann Drayton's piece on narrative development in young Trinidadian children nicely complements Brathwaite's essay, describing a study undertaken with over six hundred four- to six-year-old children from Trinidad and Tobago to determine how and when they begin to develop the linguistic skills to formulate a well-developed narrative structure.

The collection concludes with four essays dedicated to issues around education in the Caribbean. Nicha Selvon-Ramikssoon and Karen Sanderson Cole consider the implications of teaching, respectively, C.S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Merle Hodge's *For the Life of Laetitia* in secondary schools. Meanwhile, the chapters by Rowena Kalloo and Pawatee Maharaj-Sharma focus on the dynamics of the classroom, investigating the nature and effect of different teaching practices.

This is a genuinely multidisciplinary collection that retains an overall coherence despite the plurality of critical perspectives and methodologies on display. The essays are concerned primarily with the Anglophone Caribbean, with the

“Pedagogy” section dominated by studies focusing on Trinidad and Tobago; it is a shame that there are no comparative essays among the linguistics- and education-oriented contributions to match the pan-Caribbean scope of Pouchet Paquet’s literary critical piece. Nevertheless, this is a minor criticism of an otherwise wide-ranging and rich volume.

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Frederick Luis Aldama

The Routledge Concise History of Latino/a Literature. London: Routledge, 2012. xvi + 197 pp. (Paper us\$ 29.95)

To write a *concise* history of Latino/a literature seems like an impossible task. (As co-editor of the mammoth, 47-chapter *Routledge Companion to Latino/a Literature*, I know this to be true.) One might try to collapse the long history and cultural heterogeneity of the field into one coherent canon, but such a canon would inevitably reproduce stereotypes and counterproductive exclusions. “Latino/a” is a term designed to encompass a variety of groups: Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cuban Americans, Dominican Americans, and, increasingly, U.S. residents of Central and South American descent. The literature it refers to crosses national, racial, and linguistic borders and disrupts generic conventions. Latino/a literature, by definition, resists circumscription by any single framework.

Frederick Luis Aldama’s new book does an excellent job of pointing out the difficulties of the task and highlighting the diversity of the field. Its range is impressively broad, and Aldama consistently reminds readers of the challenge of trying to fit this unwieldy conglomerate into one linear history. The style he settles on does not make for seamless reading. There are repetitions, with some authors and ideas appearing in multiple contexts throughout. Aldama quotes extensively from the literary works he describes as well as from other critics. Instead of footnotes, supplementary background material appears in dozens of grey text boxes scattered throughout the book, defining terms ranging from the historical (like “The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo” and “The Cuban Revolution”) to the literary (like “Arté Público Press” and “The Nuyorican Poets’ Café”) to the philosophical (like “lowbrow, middlebrow, highbrow” and “Pre-Columbian worldview”). There is a glossary of Spanish-language terms, a guide to further reading, and conclusions at the end of each chapter that summarize key ideas with bullet points. Readers can pick and choose which of these peripheral matters to read, and which to skip. In short, this is a densely layered, inter-textual book. The overall effect is dialogic; one gets the feeling that the book is a product of a community of scholars, and decades of scholarly effort, rather than the perspective of one self-proclaimed expert. This is a brilliant solution to the problem of summarizing a diverse field. Making it too easy or too seamless would do violence to the complexity of Latino/a literature.

The primary subjects Aldama emphasizes are history (change through time), form (the diverse genres and modes of experimentation employed by Latino/a writers), language (the ways in which Latino/a writers incorporate Spanish or

other languages), and identity (the cultural diversity of Latino/as as well as the many racial and national mixtures of Latino/a authors). One of the greatest strengths of Aldama's work is his desire to tell more than the expected story. He includes writers who don't make the "short list" of most anthologies of Latino/a literature (like the nineteenth-century Cuban writer Mary Andrews Denison or the Peruvian-American editor and "chica lit" author Marie Arana), genres not usually associated with Latino/a literature (like performance art, "gumshoe," and comics), and a coda about literacy and literary criticism. Aldama (p. 1) opens the book with the claim that, as Latino/as and their writings have become increasingly diverse and increasingly institutionalized, Latino/a literature has become less coherent as a literary category:

The challenge begins with the definition of Latino/a literature and extends into the very paradox of its becoming visible as a significant body of texts at the same time that it begins a process of self-erasure. The more it becomes diversified as a literary topography in the late twentieth century and satisfies the increased appetite of a greatly varied Latino demographic, the less we see it "segregated" or placed on its own "Latino" identified shelves in a Barnes & Noble bookstore, for instance.

It is apt to ask "what is Latino/a literature?" at this moment, and Aldama's answer is remarkably inclusive.

The book creates a narrative of development, becoming more diverse as it moves chronologically, which makes sense pedagogically but also tends to overshadow the complexity of the earlier periods. After a brief preface and a longer introduction that present the central themes and outline of the book, the first chapter, "Who is a Latino/a Author? What is Latino/a Literature?," returns to the difficulty of circumscribing the field given the diverse ethnic biographies, worldviews, and geographies of Latino/a authors. Chapter 2, "Latino/a Literary Foundations," historicizes the presence of different Latino/a groups in the United States and their literary productions prior to the "Latino/a Literary Renaissance"—the title of Chapter 3, which provides an overview of Latino/a authors who emerged from the Chicano and "Émigré Latino/a" identity movements of the 1960s and 1970s to reclaim and proclaim their cultural heritage in literature. Chapter 4 outlines the "Feminist and Queer Turns," surveying some of the best-known Latino/a writers of the 1980s and 1990s, many of whom happen to be feminists, lesbians, or gay men, emerging in a climate of increasing gender sensitivity and inclusivity. Chapter 5, "New Latino/a Forms," discusses "chica lit" (Latina chick lit), historical fiction, mysteries, magical realism, post-modern experimentation, and graphic novels. The coda, "Production, Dissem-

ination, and Consumption on a Global Stage,” ends with a look at Latino/a literature’s conditions of production.

The primary weakness of the text lies not in its content but in the less than careful proofreading. But the book is still engaging and clear. It will be a useful tool for students new to the field, teachers who want to supplement their knowledge, or experts looking for new corners of the field that are not usually explored. I am glad Aldama wrote it.

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Nick Nesbitt

Caribbean Critique: Antillean Critical Theory from Toussaint to Glissant. Liverpool, U.K.: Liverpool University Press, 2013. xii + 346 pp. (Cloth US\$99.95)

The founding assumption behind Nick Nesbitt's extensive survey of French Antillean writing is that the diverse range of texts he analyzes all possess a "unifying characteristic," namely their "status as works of critique—as writings, that is, that cry out in insubordination and aversion to the state of their world (above all, that of plantation slavery and colonialism), and seek to articulate the promise that another world is possible" (p. xi). Thus Nesbitt attributes a fundamental unity to the numerous political and intellectual figures he considers, from Toussaint Louverture and the Baron de Vastey through Victor Schoelcher to Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, Maryse Condé, and Édouard Glissant. He maintains that each elaborates a "distinctly Caribbean mode of critique" (p. xiii). Although distinctly Caribbean, this mode of critique rests on a "politics of principle" that appeals neither to community nor to ethnic difference but to a universal axiom of "justice as equality" (pp. 14–19). As such, Caribbean critique is understood to be in a symbiotic relationship with what might be termed a "Western" tradition of Critical Theory running from the thinkers of the radical Enlightenment (Spinoza, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel) to those in a broadly Marxist tradition (Marx himself, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jacques Rancière, Alain Badiou).

In seeking to establish the validity of this specifically Caribbean mode of critique, Nesbitt engages in some spirited defenses of the legitimacy of political violence in certain specific circumstances, finding support in the work of Immanuel Kant. He argues that Kant defended the legitimacy of revolutionary Jacobinism as a necessary step in the establishment of a democratic state in circumstances where the *ancien régime* simply refused to recognize workers or slaves as equal human beings at all (pp. 50–59). He extends this model to argue that political violence was thus legitimate in cases such as revolutionary France and Saint-Domingue, French colonial Algeria, or Aristide's Haiti, where the very existence of democracy was at stake. By contrast, in France's Antillean possessions, whose black inhabitants enjoyed democratic rights, negotiated, nonviolent solutions were available and hence preferable (pp. xii–xiii). This, in turn, allows Nesbitt to present Césaire's advocacy in 1946 of departmentalization for the French Antilles as entirely consistent with the violent struggle of the Haitian Revolution or with Fanon's insistence on the necessity of anticolonial violence in *Les Damnés de la terre*; all can be accommodated within the unified category of "Caribbean critique" since all are motivated by the "single aim" of achieving "justice as equality" (p. 84).

On one level, this represents a justified rebuttal of all those who claim that any recourse to political violence must inevitably lead to totalitarianism. However, Nesbitt surely risks effacing here the significant political differences between Césaire and Fanon on the question of revolutionary violence. Moreover, his account rests on a rather selective presentation of the facts. Thus he makes no mention of the influence of the French Communist Party's official line on Césaire's advocacy of departmentalization, despite the fact that, as a Communist deputy, Césaire was bound to obey that line, a line that, in 1946, was set against more radical or nationalist solutions in France's colonies. Further, in defending Césaire's choices here, Nesbitt feels obliged to dismiss Léon Gontran Damas's opposition to departmentalization by unjustly caricaturing the latter as a producer of "pro-colonial propaganda" (p. 91). When discussing Césaire's shift, in 1949, to a more critical position on departmentalization (p. 107), Nesbitt also neglects to mention that this coincided with a shift in the Party line toward a more overt, if qualified anti-imperialism. Nesbitt's desire to maintain the unity and integrity of "Caribbean critique" as an analytical category thus sets in motion a questionable dialectic of absorption and expulsion that sometimes operates on highly partial and tendentious grounds.

On a more positive note, through his trenchant defenses of a radical Enlightenment tradition and the universal principles it mobilizes, Nesbitt distinguishes himself from what both Peter Hallward and Chris Bongie see as the dominant tendency in Francophone postcolonial studies toward a depoliticizing emphasis on the interstitial, the indeterminate, the hybrid, and the singular, alongside a persistent conflation of the cultural or aesthetic with the realm of politics proper. *Caribbean Critique* bears witness to Nesbitt's critical engagement with both Hallward's and Bongie's work, an engagement that sees him taking on board *some* of their criticisms of the depoliticizing tendencies in postcolonial theory, while mounting qualified defenses of the value of a politics of culture and identity in certain circumstances (pp. 141, 249). Nesbitt concedes that Hallward's and Bongie's criticisms of the allegedly depoliticizing aestheticism of the later Glissant have some validity. He thus distinguishes between that strand of Caribbean critique, epitomized by the late Glissant, that lapses into "a Nietzschean antipolitics of epicurean delight" and those figures, from Vastey to the early Glissant, who elaborate "a Caribbean *materialist dialectic*" that aims at "the constitution of a militant subject" (pp. 231–32).

The importance of Nesbitt's book thus rests on its attempts to mediate between postcolonial theory, as conventionally practiced, and the universalist axiomatics advocated by Hallward and Bongie in opposition to that discipline. Inevitably, this attempt raises a series of theoretical, political, and historical questions that would require far more detailed treatment than the limitations

of the current review allow. What is certain is that Nesbitt has made an important and highly original contribution to such debates.

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Obed Nkunzimana, Marie-Christine Rochmann & Françoise Naudillon (eds.)

L'Afrique noire dans les imaginaires antillais. Paris: Karthala, 2011. 252 pp. (Paper €24.00)

This collection of ten essays by primarily Canadian and French scholars (along with one professor at a U.S. university) was inspired by the fiftieth anniversary of the independence of several West African nations. The use of the plural “*imaginaires*” in the title reflects two principal competing visions of the continent: *négritude*’s idealized Africa embodying the ancestral past and the one that *créolistes* distance themselves from, which leads the editors to conclude that the relationship between the Caribbean and Africa is “*fait d’ambiguïtés et de contradictions*” (p. 19). The introduction opens with a discussion of the changing meanings of “Africa” over time, and then cites studies on the continent’s representations in French literature and art in order to provide a context for the essays that will follow. Focusing, for the most part, on novels published since 1980, *L'Afrique noire dans les imaginaires antillais* is not exhaustive, a fact that the editors concede.

Sébastien Sacré’s “La mise à distance de l’Afrique ancestrale: Les romans antillais contemporains” is appropriately placed first as it traces the evolution of the representation of Africa, beginning with Aimé Césaire, before concentrating on works by Raphaël Confiant, Maryse Condé, and Simone Schwarz-Bart, whose characters he feels redefine their identity by emphasizing their Caribbean roots. Thomas Demulder’s “Littératures francophones d’Afrique et des Antilles: Prolégomènes à l’affirmation d’un ‘Tout-Monde’ partagé” closes the study, arguing that the contemporary “*circuit poétique, culturel et identitaire*” between Africans and Caribbeans produces important dialogues and interconnections (p. 217).

Some essays focus on one writer; in “L’Afrique dans l’oeuvre romanesque d’Édouard Glissant,” for example, Marie-Christine Rochmann examines the presence or absence of Africa in Glissant’s *oeuvre*, ranging from *La Lézarde* to *Mahagony* and *Sartorius*. Most of the essays, however, treat a single text: “La perception de l’Afrique dans *Ti Jean L’horizon* de Simone Schwarz-Bart ou la quête d’un imaginaire composite” (Corina Crainic); “Le fil africain de Gisèle Pineau dans *L’Exil selon Julia*” (Françoise Simasotchi-Bronès); “Tremblement de femme-terre dans *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle* de Simone Schwarz-Bart” (Sarah B. Buchanan).

There are four stand-out essays that merit special consideration. Françoise Naudillon’s “Mythographies d’Afrique dans le roman populaire antillais: *Filiations* de Tony Delsham” offers an excellent analysis of the multivolume work

by the writer who targets the local market rather than what could be labeled an “elite” audience. Naudillon argues that three mythographies characterize Delsham’s saga: “*le marron primordial*,” “*le Survivant*,” and “*le Viol fondateur*.” Thoroughly researched, it also includes a bibliography of Delsham’s more than two dozen novels. Obed Nkuzimana’s “Fragments d’un continent maudit et mythique: L’Afrique dans *Biblique des derniers gestes* de Chamoiseau” follows Balthazar Bodule-Jules’s trajectory, which takes him, among other places, to Lumumba’s Congo. One of the many strengths of Mouhamadou Cissé’s “Béhanzin ou l’épopée du Dahomey dans *Les derniers rois mages* de Maryse Condé” is its interrogation of the discourses of history and myth in a close reading of the novel about the African king deported to Martinique. Mylène Dorcé offers a feminist, comparative analysis of two women’s texts in “Déconstruction de l’imaginaire de l’Afrique mythique dans *En attendant le bonheur* de Maryse Condé et *L’autre qui danse* de Suzanne Dracius.”

There is inevitably some overlap, for example Césaire’s *Cahier* and Glissant’s *Le Quatrième siècle* are cited in several essays. However, curiously, no one mentions Condé’s *Histoire de la femme cannibale* (2003), a novel set primarily in South Africa, nor the controversy that surrounded her portrait of the continent, which came to a head with the publication of the two-volume *Segou* (1984–85). At the time critics such as Jonathan Ngate in *A Current Bibliography of African Affairs* (1986–87) characterized her depiction as problematic. That she addressed the issue of representation in a keynote speech in 2007 at Stanford entitled “Images de l’Afrique de *Ségou* à *l’Histoire de la femme cannibale*” attests to her awareness of this persistent perception and critique. In her recent memoir *La Vie sans fards* (2012), she chronicles her experiences—struggles and well as friendships—while living in independence-era Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Ghana, and Senegal, making Véronique Hélénon’s *French Caribbeans in Africa: Diasporic Connections and Colonial Administration, 1880–1939* (2011) a fascinating companion piece for these two books.

L’Afrique noire dans les imaginaires antillais could be the spark that encourages literary critics to examine the work of young writers (like Fabienne Kanor, who was born in France to Martinican parents) who revisit the continent in their fiction. Kanor’s novel *Humus* (2006), for example, is based on a 1774 incident in which fourteen captive women jumped from the ship transporting them to Saint-Domingue in order to return to shore.

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Yves Clavaron & Jean-Marc Moura (eds.)

Les empires de l'Atlantique (XIXe–XXIe siècles): Figures de l'autorité impériale dans les lettres d'expression européenne de l'espace atlantique. Bécherel, France: Les Perséides, 2012. 291 pp. (Paper €26.00)

Jeroen Dewulf, Olf Praamstra & Michiel van Kempen (eds.)

Shifting the Compass: Pluricontinental Connections in Dutch Colonial and Postcolonial Literature. Newcastle, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars, 2013. vii + 286 pp. (Cloth US\$67.99)

These two books form part of a new trend to include seas and oceans in the landscapes of human history from which these bodies used to be excluded—at least in the recent past. The consideration of this “maritime perspective” opens new possibilities for making and shaping global connections.

Nevertheless, the editors of *Les empires de l'Atlantique* explain in their introductory pieces that they wish to limit themselves to a space connecting three continents—the Atlantic space, in which a literature of migration emerged reflecting complex solidarities that far surpassed national identities. Yves Clavaron connects the Francophone to the Lusophone, Hispanophone, and Dutch-speaking areas as a response to the overwhelming Anglophone presence in studies about the slave trade and the Black Atlantic. He even considers the possibility of composing an Atlantic literary history, whereas Jean-Marc Moura presents the novel *Le ventre de l'Atlantique* (2003), the bestseller by Fatou Diome translated into English as *The Belly of the Atlantic* (2006), to make a paradigmatic case for the formulation of some emblematic topoi in this literary history: the open boat, the triangle, the abyss, and the contemporary football mania.

The book is divided into four parts: “Empires and Transatlantic Histories,” “Empires and Transatlantic Influences,” “The Caribbean Atlantic,” and “Imaginary Empires.” The seventeen contributors are based in universities in Belgium, France, the United Kingdom, and Portugal. The idea of empires, therefore, constitutes the red line for these Atlantic considerations, but they are viewed in different ways. Whereas France, for instance, is still a center for the French-speaking world, the Lusophone regions seem to be less focused on one specific center, and to spread across different continents.

This Lusophone dimension is the most innovative part of the book. Marie-Isabelle Vieira discusses the representations of captains and generals in relationship to the navigators exploring the coasts of the southern continents since the fifteenth century on the one hand and, on the other, the captains and generals who, on April 25, 1974, brought about the peaceful coup d'état in Portugal

that ended a decades-long dictatorship and an even longer Atlantic empire. Vieira argues that silence reigned over the colonial wars fought in Angola, Guinee-Bissau, and Mozambique since 1961 and mentions that the only French journalist present in Lisbon in April 1974, Dominique de Roux, wrote a novel about his experiences with Portuguese history, *Le cinquième Empire* (1977), which became quite well known. Barbara Dos Santos gives examples of the influence of Brazilian modernism in the literatures of Angola and Mozambique in the 1950s, emphasizing the subsequent influence of the literature of northeast Brazil in the texts of these African writers. And Jean Claude Laborie reconstructs the perception of the Brazilian empire in three novels by the important author Joaquim Machado de Assis around 1900. In Micéala Symington's contribution on Irish literature and its relationship with the English empire, linguistic problems seem to be as important as those more commonly discussed in Caribbean literatures. The contributions on the Argentinian writer Juan José Saer and Spanish-American vanguard movements also show interesting points. These contributions alternate with essays on changes in the French-speaking "empire," in which C.L.R. James, Marie Chauvet, Patrick Chamoiseau, and other important authors and historical characters are addressed.

In contrast to Clavaron and Moura's book, *Shifting the Compass* does not stick solely to literary scholars but also includes essays by fiction writers and historians. In the introduction, Jeroen Dewulf explains that the "Dutch Oceanus" is the adequate background for studying Dutch literature, because it was over these water masses that the Dutch language was transported, establishing global connections since early modern times. Therefore, the historical contributions cover four centuries. Manjusha Kuruppath explores the reasons for which the national Dutch poet Joost van den Vondel wrote a dramatic theater piece, *Zungchin* (1667), about the fall of the Ming dynasty in China. Barry Stiefel pays tribute to Jewish Sephardic writings in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Lodewijk Wagenaar turns to Dutch administrative reports on the cinnamon peelers in Ceylon in the eighteenth century. Nicole Saffeld Maskiel analyzes elite slave networks in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in South Africa and Curaçao. Rudolf Mrázek discusses episodes in the first half of the twentieth century in Dutch colonial Indonesia. The other essays dedicated to literature demonstrate that Dutch influence extended to northeast Brazil in the seventeenth century and that Suriname knew a lively literary debate in the eighteenth century.

The first and last essays of *Shifting the Compass* consist of family autobiographies and personal testimonies by authors who reside in the Netherlands. Adriaan van Dis explains his search for belonging, growing up between "repatriates" from Indonesia in the 1960s, until his time as a professor of Dutch liter-

ature at the Sorbonne in Paris, “the biggest African city outside Africa” (p. 36), during which he included works by migrant writers in the reading lists for his students. And Giselle Ecury tries to put together the fragments of her family spread among different countries and subject to diverse political constellations, from Aruba in 1893 until the present. The rest of the fifteen contributions discuss literary works, of which Olf Praamstra’s “A World of Her Own,” about Marie Dermout’s novel *The Ten Thousand Things*, is particularly well written. This piece appears to be one of the few essays that is critical of Dutch colonialism, due to Praamstra’s consequent application of Mary Louise Pratt’s concepts of “contact zones,” “her garden,” and “anti-conquest” as the strategy “of representation whereby European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony” (p. 57).

The main question is, of course, which new insights we gain from these two volumes. In the first place, we have seen that their point of departure is quite different. *Les empires de l’Atlantique* aims to problematize and make permeable the concept of “empire” by discussing different language constellations, whereas *Shifting the Compass* subscribes uniquely to the “Dutch Oceanus,” and focuses on the Netherlands throughout. One of the contributors, Ena Arends, remarks that the establishment of contact between South African and Caribbean writers was an initiative promoted by the Netherlands, and the last sentence of the book, written by Giselle Ecury, might be taken as support for this claim: “Besides, the Netherlands has done well, especially for me” (p. 281).

Secondly, most of the contributors to both these books seem to be relatively new in the field, a fact that might explain why they barely refer to the works mentioned in the editors’ introductions. This gives some of the essays a “déjà-vu” feeling. The theoretical essays of both volumes offer a puzzling contrast. In “*L’autorité des empires de l’Atlantique à travers de quelques emblems*” (pp. 27–39), Jean-Marc Moura delivers a fascinating analysis of Fatou Diome’s novel, which relates the slave trade from the past with the contemporary global football broadcastings on television. Michiel van Kempen’s “Complexities of Non-Western Canonization” does not address the analysis of literary texts. Instead, he presents fourteen factors for judging non-Western canonization: language; social position of the author; publishers; prizes; media; criticism; collected works; anthologies; literary history; education; translation; internet; national content/national pride; accessibility. This essay on success strategies only enlists external factors, for which literature as such seems to be less relevant. The title of his essay is also rather pretentious. The Dutch Caribbean is presented as paradigmatic for non-Western canonization, without further explanation of what “non-Western” means otherwise than not belonging to the Netherlands.

These remarks should not obscure the fact that both books offer interesting readings and ideas. The most promising contributions are those presenting new writers and themes. This concerns especially the African writers in France, such as the talented Fatou Diome from Senegal, Tierno Monénembo from Guinee, or Tahar ben Jelloun from Morocco. The “Afrikaans” writer Karel Schoeman in Cape Town enters this fluid global territory with historical novels. And certainly, the complex experiences of Adriaan van Dis make the reader enthusiastic to learn more about his work.

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Supriya M. Nair (ed.)

Teaching Anglophone Caribbean Literature. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2012. ix + 459 pp. (Paper US\$ 25.00)

This collection of essays reminds us that the field of Anglophone Caribbean literature may now be so large and complex that it defies definition. Part of its growth is due to the passage of time, the influences of expanded education, mobility, and opportunity for both authors and critics, the inclusion of more genres, the recovery of unknown or unavailable works, and the greater ease of publishing both in print and on line. But much of it is due simply to a more inclusive definition. Over forty years ago Kenneth Ramchand, in his seminal *The West Indian Novel and its Background* (1970), succinctly defined West Indian novels as those that were “written by people who were born or who grew up in the West Indies—the formerly British islands in the Caribbean Sea and the South American mainland territory now known as Guyana”—and which usually had “a West Indian setting and ... characters and situations ... immediately recognizable as West Indian” (1970:3). But over the years, whether this literature has been labeled West Indian, Caribbean, Tropical, Commonwealth, World, Postcolonial, or Anglophone, our view of it has altered to the point that Supriya Nair, the editor of this volume, can imagine a course focusing not on the novels of George Lamming, Wilson Harris, and V.S. Naipaul, but instead on those of Michelle Cliff, Edwidge Danticat, Jamaica Kincaid, Zadie Smith, and Paule Marshall (who might possibly have made it into Ramchand’s book if she hadn’t been born in Brooklyn). The question of definition percolates through this work and is central to April Shemak’s “Literary and Linguistic Crossings: The Shifting Boundaries of Anglophone Caribbean Literature,” as well as to Vivian Nun Halloran’s “Anglophone Caribbean Literature in Context: A Comparative Perspective.”

This expansion of definition has occurred alongside the proliferation of “studies” programs and the refiguring of traditional departments, especially English, and has undoubtedly been influenced by it. Now there is a whole range of courses in a variety of disciplines where Anglophone Caribbean literature has found a home, or at least a room. In a general education course called “Travels through Time and Space,” Mimi Pipino taught Homer’s *Odyssey* alongside Derek Walcott’s *Omeros*. In a twelve-week course called “Aspects of Literary History that focused on pastoral poetry,” Denis deCaires Narain spent one week teaching poetry by postcolonial Caribbean women. In “Beyond the Pale, Beyond the Dark: Representing Caribbean Racial Realities at a US University,” Rhonda Frederick shows how Anglophone Caribbean literature can be a

tool for instruction in an interdisciplinary course and analyzes sociology texts on racial identity in the context of literary ones.

Aimed mainly at teachers of undergraduate students in American schools, this book should be useful and inspiring to both teachers and students at all levels. It is not a comprehensive guide to the authors, texts, periods, and themes of Anglophone Caribbean literature, and some of the contributors have limited experience teaching it. What distinguishes it is its point of view, which prizes inclusiveness and innovation, as it comes to terms with the complexity and multifariousness of the literature, and its insistence on giving insight into that literature through a variety of contexts.

Of the twenty-four contributors, two teach at the University of the West Indies: Carolyn Cooper, who writes on creole-anglophone literature, and Paula Morgan, whose essay is on Joy Mahabir's *Jouvert*. (The book's recurring theme of reader participation is, paradoxically, given fresh meaning by Morgan's students, a "microcosm of the dizzying diversity" [p. 174] of the population of Trinidad and Tobago.) The rest of the contributors, some of whom have close ties to the West Indies, are scattered at colleges and universities across the United States except for one each in England, Australia, and Canada. One contributor, Sandra Pouchet Paquet, is emerita. Of the twenty-five people involved in this project, eighteen are women.

The essays are loosely divided into four sections—Movements and Migrations; Ritual, Performance, and Popular Culture; Interpretative Approaches; and Course Contexts—which are flexible enough to allow for a broad spectrum of topics. The most useful essay for teaching an introductory survey course is by Elaine Savory, who recommends using "a deft selection of texts" representing several genres, "a historical and geographic frame," and some "connective themes related to major aspects of Caribbean culture" to carry students through "what might be a daunting amount of material" (p. 343). Several essays offer overviews of segments of the literature: Louis Parascandola's on Anglophone Caribbean authors in the Harlem Renaissance, Nicole N. Aljoe's on slave narratives, Brinda Mehta's on Indo-Caribbean literature, John C. Hawley's on black British writers, and Faith Smith's on nineteenth-century texts. Others focus on only one or two works or authors or genres or literary theories—for example, Albert Braz's on Pauline Melville's *The Ventriloquist's Tale*, Grant Farred's on Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night*, Giselle Liza Anatol's on the films *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* and *The Harder They Come*, Karina Smith's on two plays of the Sistren Theatre Collective, Timothy Chin's on Easton Lee's *From behind the Counter* and *Heritage Call* and Patricia Powell's *The Pagoda*, Joshua Albert Brewer's on gothic literature, Sandra Pouchet Paquet's on autobiographies, and companion pieces on intertextuality by Shane Graham and Alisa K. Braithwaite.

The approaches to teaching Anglophone Caribbean literature are manifold—and often inventive. Jennifer Nesbitt explores teaching several literary texts through the study of rum, and provides a resource list on “Material Culture and Commodity History.” Elizabeth Way describes teaching *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands* through an analysis of four pictures, one of the assignments being to “craft an imaginary dialogue” (p. 386) between Jane Austen’s fictional Elizabeth Bennet and the real Mary Seacole.

Each essay is followed by its own often extensive list of works cited. In addition, Nair provides a generous bibliography of useful works for the study of Anglophone Caribbean literature as a whole, highlighting the concerns reflected in the essays. Finally, embedded in the essays themselves is considerable information on nonliterary aids to teaching—film, American and BBC television productions, compact discs (of both music and the spoken word), paintings, museums, even The Weather Channel and You Tube—that can facilitate and add context to discussions.

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Sam Vásquez

Humor in the Caribbean Literary Canon. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. x + 212 pp. (Cloth us\$85.00)

Humor in the Caribbean Literary Canon elucidates the function and importance of humor, as both a strategy and a discursive mode of resistance, in the Caribbean literary tradition. It is a compelling contribution to the remapping of Caribbean Studies from the perspective of literary crossings and genre innovations, which Sam Vásquez sees as tools to reflect the complexity of Caribbean diasporic identities.

The book examines the pioneering creativity of major Caribbean writers whose interest in humor has been partly ignored by modern scholarship: a novel by Zora Neale Hurston (*Moses, Man of the Mountain*), two poems by Louise Bennett ("House O'Law" and "South Parade Peddler"), a play by Aimé Césaire (*A Tempest*), and one by Derek Walcott (*Pantomime*). Vásquez analyzes each writer's specific skills at exploiting the creative potential of humor to connect Caribbean motifs with the Western canon. She convincingly argues that these writers reinvented elements of African oral culture, not only to contest European literary canons but also to offer an alternative narrative to the heteropatriarchal and masculinist norms that prevailed in the Caribbean identity movements of their times, such as the Harlem Renaissance in the United States, *négritude* in the Afro-Caribbean region, and Black nationalism in Jamaica and Trinidad. Using a wide range of theoretical approaches, from Sigmund Freud, Luigi Pirandello, and Constance Rourke to Simon Critchley and Glenda Carpio, Vásquez aptly demonstrates that Caribbean humorous expressions "animate African diasporic bodies and discourses rather than engage in dualistic parodying and simplistic subversions" (p. 19).

The first chapter examines the female character Miriam in Hurston's *Moses, Man of the Mountain*, a female griot whose oral authority gives new meaning to matriarchal wit in the Caribbean literary tradition. The story of Moses's birth, told repeatedly by Miriam, is a lie whereby she provides the community with an alternative creation myth. Hurston's *tour de force* consists of granting Moses's sister the power to re-imagine the biblical tale into a female master narrative, at a time when Hurston herself was an isolated female voice within the Harlem Renaissance. The novel merges African oral traditions with scribal traditions from multiple geographic spaces, by associating, for instance, Moses and his wife Zipporah, lighter and younger than Miriam, to the Haitian gods Damballah and Erzulie. Not only does this reflect Hurston's critique of the American occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934, it also enables her to reconsider the differences between Caribbean and U.S.-born individuals within the African

Diaspora. Vásquez shows that through humor, Hurston triggers reflection on class, race, and generational issues within the Afro-Caribbean collective imagination.

The second chapter deals with Bennett's trickster poetics and the representation of Jamaican female sexuality. As Vásquez notes, beyond Bennett's apparent folksy and docile image as an "asexual mammy wearing madras," she is "far from tamed" (p. 58). By merging folklore and Jamaican patois, she in fact gives voice to the working-class Jamaican woman and reimagines her sexuality as active rather than passive and degrading, using it as a tool for self-representation rather than as a symptom of alienation. In the poem "House O'Law," the accused Milly embodies the trickster's talent, using her sexuality to manipulate the institutions of justice. The poem "South Parade Peddler" empowers the female voice as a socially, economically, and sexually active subject in 1940s Kingston, while beckoning the pedestrians to purchase her wares using double-entendre and rhythmic creativity to "croon her request."

Vásquez then turns to two understudied plays by canonical male writers. Chapter 3 analyzes Césaire's *A Tempest* from the perspective of Eshu, the semi deity and performer at the heart of the play. She convincingly argues that, as a trickster with transgendered attributes, Eshu not only stands for various defenders of Black causes such as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, the leaders of the Mau Mau rebellion, and "the black maroons"; he is also the Master of Ceremony and the performer of sexually cunning songs, whereby he triggers the reader's participation and challenges the norms of heterosexual masculinity. Césaire therefore uses sex and race to invent different ways of accounting for African diasporic cultural productions, thus adding new layers to the Shakespearean primary text. Vásquez convincingly links *A Tempest* with Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*. Chapter 4 examines Walcott's *Pantomime* as a carnivalesque inversion of *Robinson Crusoe*'s paradigms: black calypsonian Jackson plays master Crusoe, while white playwright Harry plays Friday. After analyzing Walcott's appropriation of call and response and Calypso, Vásquez explores how the play projects a sociopolitical critique of 1970s Trinidad, gives prominence to Friday as a first-person protagonist, and dramatizes tensions between blacks and East Indians. Humorous strategies include the use of English and Creole accents and transgendered performance. As a master of language, Jackson the trickster demonstrates his talent to go beyond racial and class stereotypes, triggering "both ambiguity and parity between master and marginalized" (p. 149). As Vásquez compellingly argues, the absence of women in both plays (Sycorax's mother and Harry's wife), performed by male tricksters, unveils the limitations of hypermasculinist norms within Caribbean societies.

The conclusion examines the resonances between Hurston, Bennett, Césaire, and Walcott and highlights the legacy of their pioneering works in recent Caribbean diasporic cultural productions, from dancehall (Lady Saw) to fiction (Junot Díaz, Anthony Winkler).

The book offers a new contribution to the field by showing that humor is a fundamental discursive strategy at play in Caribbean literature. It is to be hoped that scholars will from now on explore less studied authors from this perspective as well.

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Bernard Diederich

Seeds of Fiction: Graham Greene's Adventures in Haiti and Central America, 1954–1983. London: Peter Owen, 2012. 315 pp. (Cloth US\$29.95)

Former Latin America correspondent Bernard Diederich's account of his relationship with Graham Greene and their journeys to Haiti and Central America from the 1950s to the 1980s is a most valuable memoir and resource for those interested in the peripatetic author and the troubled Cold War politics of the region. The renowned twentieth-century British writer gives the now retired journalist the perfect entrée to his specialist subject of Latin America in a book that is neatly divided into two equal parts, firstly dealing with Greene in Haiti and later in Central America.

Diederich, a New Zealander by birth, details his first brief encounters with Greene from 1954 onward in Haiti, where the correspondent had set up an English-language weekly newspaper and lived with his Haitian wife. Like many writers and artists, Greene was attracted by the exotic black Caribbean republic, independent since 1804. But Haiti's relative peace was ruined from 1957 by the autocratic rule of country physician François "Papa Doc" Duvalier, who soon ruled the ex-French colony as a repressive dictator, many of his subjects mesmerized by his cultivation of Voodoo.

The early part of Diederich's book gives an overview of Haitian history and is interspersed with travelogue. His newspaper's anti-Duvalierist stance courts the wrath of the country's self-appointed president-for-life and his Tontons Macoutes, a murderous plain-clothes militia. Diederich is arrested, imprisoned, and forced into exile in the neighboring Dominican Republic. As he explains, it is for this reason that he subtly encourages Greene to set a new novel in contemporary Haiti, hoping that it will act as a propaganda tool against the repressive regime. Greene, a champion of the underdog and Third World causes, bites. His deportation from Puerto Rico by U.S. immigration authorities in 1954 still rankles, its interlude on the tarmac at Port-au-Prince airport witnessed and described at first-hand by Diederich (pp. 88–89). With his "latent anti-Americanism" (p. 83), and his willingness to act against what he identifies as a Washington-backed regime, Greene readily becomes involved in this new cause.

Diederich is the perfect companion for Greene, speaking both Haiti's patois-French and Spanish, and with a host of local contacts. He does not pry into the writer's complex and closely-guarded private life, and is more than happy to accompany him along the Haitian-Dominican Republic border in 1965 as Greene undertakes tentative research into a possible new novel. His success in

persuading him to write it is significant because the subsequent appearance of *The Comedians* in 1966 ended a lengthy break from publication.

He is also gratified because Greene accurately portrays the macabre nature of the “Papa Doc” dictatorship, and Diederich recognizes some of the composite characters in the novel. Furthermore, its publication gives oppressed Haitians a voice in a Third World cause of which the outside world is largely ignorant. Greene has bloodied Duvalier with his pen, and the Voodoo dictator’s palpable anger is evident in his risible attempt to avenge the writer by publishing a glossy denunciatory official pamphlet. Greene, who never won the Nobel Prize for Literature, considered it one of his highest accolades. “Papa Doc” is also incandescent over the release of a cinematographic version of *The Comedians* (1967), though he only manages to suppress its release in a couple of foreign countries. But the Greene-scripted film is overlong, like some of Diederich’s newspaper quotations, and it does not attract critical acclaim.

While Greene first travelled to Haiti of his own accord, Diederich was instrumental in facilitating his first trip to Central America in the 1970s, commencing a long and direct involvement in the politics of the region. By now Diederich was *Time* magazine’s bureau chief in Mexico City, and it took him four years of persistence to persuade Greene to travel to the isthmus and meet left-wing Panamanian dictator Omar Torrijos in 1976. It was a propitious year to visit, amidst tentative negotiations between U.S. and Panamanian governments over the future of the strategically important Panama Canal.

Diederich is rewarded because Torrijos and Greene instantly “hit it off” (p. 172), the general reclining in his hammock and the Briton downing a line of potent rum punches. Greene also warms to his trusted aide, the “eclectic multilingual” ex-Professor of Philosophy Sergeant José Jesús “Chuchu” Martínez (p. 170). All three share a distrust of U.S. foreign policy. Meanwhile, Diederich’s descriptions of Torrijos as a “dictatorial but populist strongman” (p. 164) are reminiscent of Hugo Chávez (1954–2013), instigator of the later Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela.

The journalist is on professional home ground, describing the complicated machinations of politics in the small Central American republics of Panama, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. He attests to Greene’s finely-tuned political antenna and his ready powers of assimilation, readily distinguishing between the more and the less trustworthy protagonists in Central American politics. Their relationship is evidently much deeper than that of a regular journalist and writer interacting on a formal basis because Diederich is also Greene’s local fixer, his translator, his advisor on Central American politics, his travel guide, and a trusted friend.

It is remarkable that the septuagenarian and later octogenarian writer should make so many long and strenuous journeys to the disturbed region,

before and during the Ronald Reagan presidency that did so much to affect it during the final period of the Cold War. But then, as Diederich explains, Greene longed for adventurous escapes from domesticity, especially if he could thumb his nose at Washington at the same time, even flying to Washington on a Panamanian diplomatic passport for the official signing of the Panama Canal Treaty in 1977. We are fortunate that a veteran journalist's eye and pen have recorded Greene's lengthy involvement in Latin American politics in such detail. It is an important and enthralling testimony.

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Ian Thomson

The Dead Yard: Tales of Modern Jamaica. New York: Nation Books, 2011. xviii + 370 pp. (Paper US\$16.99)

The Dead Yard is the 2010 winner of the Royal Society of Literature Ondaatje Prize as well as the Dolman Travel Book of the Year. In spite of these accolades in Britain, the book had caused quite a stir in Jamaica. Thomson's damaging depiction of the island ired many. Indeed, as he writes in the preface to the U.S. edition, "*The Dead Yard* exposes a dark side of island life at odds with the 'paradise' island of travel brochures." It was not surprising then, that the promotional announcement for the book's first publication in *The Independent UK* was entitled "Sun, Sand and Savagery: What Ever Happened to Jamaica, Paradise Island?" Controversial books sell. It really is that simple.

In the introduction, "A History of Paradise," Thomson sets out to explore the island and answer what turns out to be a rhetorical question from an elderly white Jamaican woman who not only asks him whether we really need another book on Jamaica, but most poignantly adds, "You visitors are always getting it wrong. Either it's golden beaches or it's guns, guns, guns. Is there nothing in between?" (p. 1).

In the following 26 chapters and 349 pages, Thomson proceeds to confirm that indeed (at least from his perspective) there certainly is no "in between." Part history, part travelogue, he "goes [as] native" as he can on his jaunts as a lanky white Englishman combing through the mountainous landscape and coasts to conduct interviews with a slew of subjects who let him into their homes as he seeks to comprehend Jamaica. The majority of them are contacts from friends and colleagues in England. Others include notable figures in Jamaica's business and art communities as well as public intellectuals. He writes that his subjects, often of a certain age, tend to be "afflicted with English politesse" (p. 212), which in some ways charms him. It is their nostalgic lament for the days of old that Thomson captures well. The underside of this social attachment to "Auntie England," however, also lies behind a disdain for the black masses who are reducible to modern-day savages in this country of "chaos and ruins."

The book is a nonending refrain of a Jamaica gone wrong in the aftermath of the "orderly transition" (p. 190) from colonialism to independence. The brutal legacy of colonialism and slavery is a point of focus for Thomson who remarks on the "dismal extent Jamaica has absorbed values from colonial Britain" (p. 45), referring to the country's antihomosexual laws and a legal system with courtrooms where the judge dons a scarlet robe, a crooked wig, and other remnants of the British past. This Jamaica is practically the Wild Wild

West—an entrenched, structurally unequal work that pits people against each other and where the gun rules. Indeed, one wonders whether living among the disadvantaged is at all possible there.

Thomson's emphasis on violence is concomitant with his search for a paradise that exists only in his imagination and that of most of his subjects. This was punctuated when he did encounter a different perspective from singer Ernest Ranglin, who rejected the ideal "pastime paradise ... glorifying days long gone behind." Thomson admitted his surprise and quickly dismissed it: "The Ranglin version of Jamaica allowed for greater hope than I had thought possible" (p. 254).

Life may be easy for those with wealth but most of them live in constant fear of losing their property and the indiscriminate violence. This is an illuminating aspect of the book as Thomson opens a jalousie onto the lives of white Jamaicans whose affairs remain obscure to those outside their circles. He recounts time spent in Port Antonio with Patrice Wynmore, Errol Flynn's ex-wife who inherited his estate. She expressed her fears "as a wealthy white woman in a poor black country" (p. 198), especially during the Manley years. For Wynmore, "envy" is the defining characteristic of Jamaican identity, and it even crosses racial lines. We learn that Blanche Blackwell, who was Ian Fleming's former lover and the mother of Chris Blackwell (founder of Island Records—the label that globalized reggae), shared "other Jamaicans' ... complaint about 'declining standards'" (p. 233). More specifically she said that "Independence was the *worst* thing that could have happened to Jamaicans—they were simply not ready for it." (Mother and son run *Goldeneye*, Fleming's retreat that inspired his 007 series.) Thomson's visit to Itopia, the home of Sally Henzell and the late Perry Henzell, (writer-director-producer of *The Harder They Come*), is also revealing. He quotes Sally's prediction about his book: "You know I'm dead squeamish about you turning your gaze on Jamaica, Ian. You're going to unravel all kinds of murder and mayhem, aren't you? Then you're going to contrast it with poor old whitey here leading the life of Riley" (p. 261). He then proceeds to note Perry's consumption of ganja, which inevitably made him high.

With regard to the black masses, Thomson has nothing to offer that one could not access in a music video. To paraphrase the title of his eighth chapter, *The Dead Yard* is "Maximum White," as his views on blackness are not only encapsulated in time but are recycled archaic tropes of post-coloniality and race. This is true whether his subjects are gun-wielding musicians or disillusioned Rastas or benevolent whites who came to Jamaica as volunteers to save the unruly natives from themselves.

Not surprisingly, he writes that "Jamaican dancehall in the twentieth century seems to present black people to the world in terms the Ku Klux Klan would use:

illiterate, gold-chain wearing, sullen combative buffoons" (p. 44). No subversion here. Thus, it only follows that the "African consciousness" of Walter Rodney, for example, has evolved into an "unsophisticated ... obsession with respect" (p. 98). His white gaze is uncompromising. Modernity clearly left *all* of "these people" behind. His additional insights do come from somewhere. He provides real names and locations. Dare I say, his treatment of his "informants" certainly raises issues concerning journalism and ethics.

In the acknowledgements, which include an abbreviated who's-who list of residents whose names open doors to navigate the impenetrable classed terrain, Thomson informs his readers that "*The Dead Yard* is not 'the' truth, it's only as I saw it" (p. xiii, my emphasis). Unfortunately, this disclaimer cannot undo his stereotype of the island as a place "stuck in colonial malaise" that "needs to banish its psychological dependency to the Mother Country" (p. 347). Moreover, the limits of Thomson's gaze confirm the high market value of dystopia. This award-winning book is in its second printing.

I am not convinced that reviews of popular books in academic journals are a worthy endeavor since their readership is hardly likely to read these critiques. In that sense, it is somewhat unfair to expect popular books to meet scholarly standards. The question then is whether a popular book can be read on its own merit and what value if any this would have for an academic audience. For Thomson's book, the answer would be: none. A more suitable subtitle would have been *A Tale of a Long Gone Jamaica as Told by a White Englishman on a Quest in The Empire's Last Black Frontier*. Readers beware: *The Dead Yard* promises consistent doses of epistemic violence that could easily have been avoided.

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Doris Y. Kadish

Fathers, Daughters, and Slaves: Women Writers and French Colonial Slavery.
 Liverpool, U.K.: Liverpool University Press, 2012. ix + 186 pp. (Cloth £65.00)

Fathers, Daughters, and Slaves offers a feminist reflection that showcases French women's voices forgotten amid the praise of their more celebrated male counterparts. Doris Kadish questions the "historical neglect" of women in French and Francophone studies, investigating the French colonial empire and the Atlantic world before and after the French Revolution, from the 1780s to the 1820s. She interrogates the omnipresent father figure in the works and lives of three canonical writers—Germaine de Stael, Claire de Duras, and Marceline Desbordes-Valmore—and two lesser-known but important figures, Charlotte Dard and Sophie Doin. She probes their sentimental discourse around the search for a legitimate father figure to serve as a political tool following the French Revolution and contends that their empathy toward the oppressed, black slaves, or other subjected colonial subjects, breaks down patriarchal discourse through their representations of family life and slavery. Kadish connects these "women writers' sensitivity to broader issues such as memory, hybridity, creolization, identity formation, and the ideological implications of pity, paternalism, and sentimental discourse" (p. 7). They may not have directly challenged the patriarchal order, but their sentimental literature offers a counter-discourse to such colonial representations as those found in Victor Hugo's *Bug-Jagal* or Prosper Mérimée's *Tamango*.

These women faced the dwindling power of their biological fathers, and dealt in their writing with symbolic paternal figures through the notions of the benevolent and irresponsible patriarchs. Indeed, Rousseau's *Julie* and Bernadin de St Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* stand as the favored intertext in the feminine sentimental literature around paternal authority, women's autonomy, race relations, and abolitionism. Yet this empathy with the plight of black slaves, which echoes women's subjection, stems from a place of privilege. Eventually, Kadish wonders how these writers navigated social dictates to propose their own views of abolition and femininity and asks how their feminine subjectivity could organize itself around paternal figures. To answer this question, she contrasts white feminine authors to black writers in the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries who address the same themes. This contrapuntal approach reveals the women's agency and commitment to both race and gender issues.

The book's introduction adopts a cross-disciplinary approach to questions of subservience and agency. Kadish draws on the work of feminist scholars such as historian Gerda Lerner to assert the historical links among slavery, patriarchy, and the subordination of women. Postcolonial critics such as Edward

Said influence her interrogation of discursive formations around race, gender, and agency, illustrating how cultures shape writers and writers shape cultures. Chapter 1, "Patriarchy and Abolition," puts Germaine de Staël's work and Isaac Louverture's defense of his father in dialogue. In their texts, the imagery of tyrannical patriarchs such as Napoleon Bonaparte that negatively affect the condition of women and slaves is at odds with good paternal figures. Chapter 2, "Fathers and Colonization," complicates interactions between father figures and their daughters in colonial Africa. Charlotte Dard's rehabilitation of her father in postrevolutionary French history destabilizes the literary representations of the sexual politics around *signares*. These African women, often biracial paramours of affluent European patriarchs such as Dard's father and husband, come to symbolize a problematic mixing of cultures that questions European colonialism and sexism.

Chapter 3, "Daughters and Paternalism," concentrates on Marceline Desbordes-Valmore's 1820s corpus about slavery. This actress who lives precariously empathizes with the oppressed slaves. Her praise of "maternal" fathers and her critique of despotic paternal figures construct a problematic feminine empowerment and subjectivity associated with the black condition. Here, Desbordes-Valmore's work and life enter into conversation with literary representations by Minette, a celebrated mixed-race actress from Saint-Domingue. Chapter 4, "Voices of Daughters and Slaves," opens with a discussion of Claire de Duras's life and novel *Ourika*, which Kadish compares to Henriette de la Tour Dupin's works. It closes with an examination of the way twentieth-century Caribbean writers have read Duras and underscores Aimé Césaire's lack of empathy toward this female writer, contrary to Maryse Condé and Daniel Maximin. Chapter 5, "Uniting Black and White Family," examines the theme of unity within the marital sphere through the association of women's conditions and black experience in Sophie Doin's abolitionist corpus and autobiographical writings. Then, Doin's texts are contrasted to those of black Caribbean artists Guillaume Guillon-Lethière and Juste Chanlatte to reveal the exclusion of women in their fight for equality. The postscript contrasts Anne-Louis Girodet's *Portrait du citoyen Belley, ex-représentant des colonies* to the painting *Mme de Staël à côté du buste de son père Jacques Necker*, attributed to Firmin Massot. This intriguing comparison denotes the textual power of painted representations and insists on the diversity of the literary constructions of fathers, daughters, and slaves.

Kadish's study proves that white women's sentimental literature contributed to the larger discourse about race, colonialism, and gender. The perspective of nineteenth-century black writers shows that their main concern was race and not gender equality, an issue white men also neglected. Envisioning the

story of slavery by accounting for white women writers' empathy alone might have led one to conclude that black voices were unable to talk about their own experience. Adding twentieth-century novels to this study allows Kadish to show how representations of fathers, daughters, and slaves have been revisited and how acknowledging feminine contributions remains problematic. Yet, the claim that "neo-slave narratives such as Maximin's are especially important since no authentic slave narratives have survived in the Francophone world" (p. 17) might be seen as contentious. Fictional narratives such as *L'isolé soleil*, no matter how enlightening in their promotion of gender equality and racial pride, should not overshadow other avenues through which black slaves and their descendants expressed their concern and agency in the nineteenth century, such as essays, pamphlets, or court proceedings, even if this means grappling with the alleged sexism of these documents. That said, *Fathers, Daughters, and Slaves* is a valuable contribution to scholars committed to illuminating the gender issues at play in the understanding of white and black women in the French and Francophone colonial and postcolonial world.

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Suzanne Césaire (Daniel Maximin [ed.])

The Great Camouflage: Writings of Dissent (1941–1945). Middletown CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2012. xxxvi + 67 pp. (Paper US\$ 18.95)

The Great Camouflage is most welcome. Non-Francophones sorely needed to have access to Suzanne Césaire's writings, and the translating work of Keith L. Walker and editing by Daniel Maximin deliver. We thank them for that.

Gratitude out of the way, readers of this small volume will not fail to notice the overabundance of men (that is, the non-mention of relevant women) in what could have been a more astute recovery and framing for a general Anglo-phone audience. Fact: Suzanne Césaire need not be recovered for academic audiences. That work has already been done by Marie-Agnès Sourieau, Maryse Condé, Smita Tripathi, Kara Rabbitt and other women, not to mention the widely disseminated edition of the full run of *Tropiques* by Jacqueline Leiner. Here, except for a short poem by daughter Ina, Césaire's work is framed on both sides by, well, men. We cannot even say that this was the case during her run at *Tropiques*, where she was accompanied on several occasions by Georgette Anderson, Jeanne Mégren, Lucie Thésée, and Lydia Cabrera.

Perhaps these statistics would not be such a shortcoming were the language (of Maximin in particular) not to betray a masculinist optic. Yes, Suzanne Césaire was (and still is) surrounded by men enraptured by her beauty ... but that is perfectly irrelevant. She has no need to be framed under the banner of eros when we are trying to grasp the relevance of her thought, even as that thought itself is often erotic. Walker's much more measured "Translator's Introduction" lists the many variants of the Great Camouflage or *détournements* that Césaire unravels for us in her writings—Gallic humanist values, brilliant technology, the Vichy regime-within-a-regime, geography, art—but neglects the one that resurfaces in this edition: male desire.

The introductory text by Maximin is rife with infelicitous turns of this sort. In the opening pages we arrive quickly at her wedding day, with a description of the dress she was wearing. This is followed by a note on her "sun-filled beauty and power, visible in the sparkle of her eyes and the radiance of her hair," a beautiful line in some contexts, perfectly irrelevant here. When referring to Jenny Alpha, Gerty Archimède, and Suzanne Césaire together, he calls them "seductive while refusing to be seductresses, fiancées of Dionysius more than sisters of Eurydice" (p. xxxii). While Maximin tries to accommodate these feminizing gestures to Césaire's own rapprochement to Frobenius's "plant-woman," we may feel that the gesture neglects the universalizing form of the feminine that Césaire deploys and reinscribes her in the graceful suffering of the woman of beauty.

The seven essays by Césaire that follow the introductory frames, which represent her total essayistic output in *Tropiques*, are in turn followed by selected writings by André Breton, René Ménénil, Aimé Césaire, and finally, Ina Césaire. Ostensibly these writings are meant to either contextualize or pay homage to Suzanne Césaire. The contextual fragments are short and do very little other than frame Césaire as a woman of genius among a cadre of towering men and an artistic family who loved her. Given that the volume is small, we can justify these inclusions as a certain kind of filler, but we wonder, why not signal the already present body of critical work on this author?

That said, I hope that readers of this review who have not had a chance to read Suzanne Césaire's work because of language barriers or for any other reason, will obtain a copy of this book.

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V. Eudine Barriteau (ed.)

Love and Power: Caribbean Discourses on Gender. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2012. xii + 516 pp. (Paper US\$ 35.00)

The project of Caribbean feminist scholarship has been extensive—producing alternate narratives in an attempt to undermine practices of domination, engaging in significant projects of recovery, and aiming to uncloak the multiple and complex ways in which gender is significant to Caribbean life. This book furthers these efforts by providing multidisciplinary analyses of the implications of gendered discourses for various aspects of Caribbean societies.

Eudine Barriteau's introduction presents the book as concerned with rupturing "embedded and resilient patriarchal knowledge claims" (p. 4). She notes that in spite of the transformative contributions of feminist scholars in the Caribbean, there remains a reluctance to engage with their work and the gendered analyses it exemplifies. The book, then, is aimed at confronting this trend, while taking on the "contradictions, continuities, changes and transitions confounding and configuring the social, political and knowledge economy" of the region (p. 10). Critical to this undertaking, she writes, is the need to trace circuits of power and the ways in which they produce relations of gender.

The chapters make important contributions to a range of subjects including political economy, masculinities, motherhood, science and technology, pedagogies, and epistemologies. They deal with the issue of "multiple exclusions," often associated with theorizing the Caribbean, by centering both gender as a relevant and necessary analytical consideration and the Caribbean as the site of these analyses. While gender is the entry point for this book, many authors engage with the way gendered realities are constituted within and through the racialized, classed, and sexualized hierarchies produced by the (post)colonial conditions of the region. For instance, in her examination of issues of security and HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean, Wendy Grenade highlights the inadequacies of conventional conceptualizations of security, illustrating how they have overlooked critical issues associated with women's precarious life situations in the Caribbean. She uses this critique to generate a more nuanced approach, demonstrating how a range of historically situated structural inequities produce specific security issues for women in the region.

Many of the chapters also establish the salience of gendered discourses not only to fields of study where they have been more readily examined in the region, but also to disciplines often associated with what Kristina Hinds-Harrison, in a chapter on Caribbean trade relations, refers to as "gender forgetting" (p. 208). As such, a number of the essays make tangible links between

these theoretical gaps, their implications for “gender neutral” policy development and decision-making, and consequently, their inimical material outcomes. By introducing such analyses, the assumed universality of their various disciplines is destabilized and the gendered assumptions embedded in these theoretical traditions exposed.

A number of the contributors pay attention to the Caribbean’s positioning in relation to networks of power, knowledge, and bodies—both across and within national borders. Through a focus on contemporary contexts and in some cases historical inquiries, the authors write against varied forms of *othering*. By extension, these examinations also consider the production of (de)legitimized subjectivities, the ways in which they are maintained, and the inequities they (re)produce. Charmaine Crawford, for example, examines such connections while exploring working-class African Caribbean women’s practices of mothering, challenging traditional and privileged definitions of motherhood. By examining their experiences as they migrate to contend with economic struggle in contemporary neoliberal conditions, she tracks the transnational networks of care that these women develop to support their families as they parent across national borders. She links these practices to their strategies for survival.

The collection extends existing feminist scholarship in the region, primarily through Barriteau’s engagement with the underexplored area of love, the erotic, and their generative power. She invites us to consider the matrices and productivity of this power as she embarks on inquiries into politicized sexuality and its implications for women’s positionings in the political economy. Although the questions of love and the erotic are not new to feminist theorizing, Barriteau offers new possibilities for understanding negotiations of power, the (re)production of domination at various sites, and the fallibility of private/public binaries in the region.

While incorporating the work of established scholars such as Patricia Mohammed, Don Marshall, and Barriteau, the text also allows a newer generation of thinkers to establish dialogues with existing Caribbean feminist praxis—incorporating its analyses and methodologies and aiming to challenge and transform it. This is a promising and exciting sign as it points to investments in the further cultivation of critical engagements with issues of gender in the region. Tonya Haynes’s chapter is an excellent example of this as she questions Caribbean feminists’ lack of engagement with the work of Caribbean scholar Sylvia Wynter. She suggests that Wynter’s challenges to mainstream conceptualizations of gender are potentially productive for Caribbean feminisms, since they urge the continued interrogation of our relied-upon discursive frameworks and their legacies. It is such reminders that make this book a valuable

addition to existing scholarship. The contributors have crafted timely gendered explorations of the social, economic, cultural, and political life of the Caribbean that are relevant to the critical challenges facing the region in the contemporary moment.

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Deborah Cullen & Elvis Fuentes (eds.)

Caribbean: Art at the Crossroads of the World. New York: Museo del Barrio & New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012. 495 pp. (Cloth US\$65.00)

Caribbean: Art at the Crossroads of the World, more of a book than a catalog, was published on the occasion of the homonymous exhibition at the Museo del Barrio, the Queens Museum of Art, and the Studio Museum in Harlem in New York. It consists of twenty essays, a selection of excerpts of major historical texts, hundreds of full-color illustrations, and a comprehensive bibliography. The aim is to map the large spectrum of questions related to the diversity of populations, vernacular traditions, emigrated cultures, and contemporary artistic production in order to foster research in the rather neglected field of Caribbean art.

The book recounts the many geographical and historical events and circumstances that account for the difficulty, experienced and commented on by many Caribbean actors of the cultural scene, of reconstructing a history that goes back to colonial domination and the violence of slavery. Thus, it offers a significant effort to build, as Derek Walcott writes in “The Antilles: Fragments of Epic Memory,” a “memory that yearns to join the center, a limb remembering the body from which it has been severed, like those bamboo thighs of the god. ... No people. Fragments and echoes of real people, unoriginal and broken” (p. 21).

Many of the texts deal with the artistic production of specific countries—Haiti (Gérald Alexis), Curaçao (Jennifer Smit), Jamaica (Veerle Poupeye)—while others are dedicated to themes such as the body in Caribbean art (Rocío Aranda-Alvarado), the founders of art in the Caribbean (Álvaro Medina), Surrealism in the Caribbean (Lowery Stokes Sims), the Harlem Renaissance and New York’s Afro-Caribbean diaspora (Deborah Cullen), and Maroons in Suriname and French Guiana (Richard Price & Sally Price). Edward J. Sullivan offers an overview of the past three decades of exhibitions and collecting in the United States.

The very large and appropriate iconography reflects this diversity with a strong emphasis on the contemporary visual arts. This is perhaps the most innovative aspect of the book. The images provide convincing evidence for the central topic of a fragile cultural memory, which is elaborated in many of the essays. But readers (who are also viewers) receive the strong impression that many of these artworks are not “illustrating” some intellectual idea, but rather thinking by themselves, exploring the depth and breadth of the mnemonic fracture of the Caribbean identity by mixing and matching cultural references.

The cultural history of the Caribbean is sailing between the historical time that enacts an *a posteriori* reconstruction of the chronological sequences and the time of the memory for which every remembrance is simultaneously present. They are different in their form and in their content. Indeed, the first tends to erase the richness of the remembrances in order to construct a true coherence. Yet in the Caribbean, because of the cultural uprooting from Africa but also from India or China, it is necessary for the history to be reconstructed to be itself a recollection of dispersed fragments of a memory. And this possible memory, not yet actual and self-conscious, only exists in the cultural and artistic testimonies, in the oral tradition and in all the places and objects in which something of the lost past has found a precarious shelter.

As he was developing these ideas in *Le discours antillais*, Édouard Glissant was at the same time evaluating the place and function of the aesthetic form of his own book. He wrote: "Our intention in this work was *to pull together all levels of experience*. This piling-up is the most suitable technique for exposing a reality that is itself being scattered. Its evolution is like a repetition of a few observations that *take root*, tied to realities that *keep slipping away*" (Glissant 1981:13; the English translation is by J. Michael Dash in Glissant 1989:4).

I think that we may also consider *Caribbean: Art at the Crossroads of the World* from the point of view of the meaningfulness of such an accumulation. We would then stress accumulation as a strategy related to the need to reconstruct the historical and cultural existence of Caribbean populations. The appearance of such a book in the very poor context of publications on Caribbean art constitutes a memorable event in this process of reconstruction. As an object, it materializes a moment of cultural crystallization, which is part of the more global process of historical recovery. This book and exhibition will significantly contribute to the international move for recognition of a specific Caribbean transcultural identity.

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Stephanie Leigh Batiste

Darkening Mirrors: Imperial Representation in Depression-Era African American Performance. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2011. xx + 326 pp. (Paper US\$ 25.95)

Darkening Mirrors takes off from Stephanie Leigh Batiste's notice that an array of black performances from the late 1920s to the mid-1940s share a common interest in empire. Batiste includes a diversity of material in the category of "black performance." Her chapters examine a promotional film made for the black resort of Idlewild, Michigan; an inter- and intraracial melodrama by the bootstrap independent black film director Oscar Micheaux; a black-cast singing Western; the Federal Theater Project's "Negro Unit" productions of *Macbeth*, *Haiti*, and *The Mikado*; Katherine Dunham's choreography; an off-Hollywood B-movie called *The Devil's Daughter* that was filmed in Jamaica; and the Hollywood, all-star, black-cast musical *Stormy Weather*. As this list might imply, Batiste also includes a variety of locales in her category of "empire": the American Midwest and West, the Caribbean, (especially Haiti), Japan, and the South Pacific.

Through careful analysis, Batiste aims to "pinpoint ... black peoples' use of representational structures that sustained the imperial project [a project that created the category of 'black people'], and how black people changed those structures" (p. xiii). Performance—whether live or filmed, dramatic or musical, popular and generic or explicitly aesthetic and anti-generic—is a privileged object of analysis for Batiste because it is elusive and multiple. She argues that performance is especially suited to presenting complexities and contradictions, and it is these features of her archive that most interest her. She sees these depression-era performances as offering blacks (both artists and audiences) venues for criticizing racism in the United States and developing a black diasporic identity critical of U.S. imperialism. At the same time, the performances also make the case for blacks as Americans and are thus engaged in and even rely on U.S. imperialism. Put differently, Batiste sees these performances as deeply connected with power, both in the United States and projected around the globe, and with African Americans imagining themselves as having power—and, thereby, seeking power, even becoming "complicit" with it, rather than just resisting it.

The strongest section of *Darkening Mirrors* is its three central chapters on the Federal Theatre Project and Dunham (whose *L'Ag'Ya*, the dance Batiste focuses on, was staged by the FTP). The density of the FTP's archive, along with the available materials on some of the artists themselves (including Dunham), aids Batiste in tracking the complexities, layers, and clashes of intent

and agency that undergirded the so-called “voodoo” *Macbeth*, as well as *Haiti* (which dramatized the revolution), *The Swing Mikado*, and Dunham’s choreography (which was informed by her anthropological training with Melville Herskovits and her fieldwork across the Caribbean). The centrality to the FTP of the nation, national renovation, and nation-building—and the bald (and not unnoticed at the time) contradictions of a progressive national project having explicitly segregated units—also helps Batiste focus her argument. That these shows were all live and now exist only in fragmentary records also pushes Batiste to pay particular attention to issues of reception, keeping the labile aspects of black American performance front and center. The chapters focused on films offer some illuminating and well contextualized readings of *texts*, but the (comparative) stability of the film, as a recording or construction of a performance, along with the less complete and often frustratingly missing archives around these films’ productions and receptions, make these chapters less uniformly robust than those on the FTP.

Batiste’s capacious sense of the United States’ imperial imagination is a strength of *Darkening Mirrors*. For those familiar with some of the works she examines (and few readers will know them all), the combinations and juxtapositions her analyses create will be refreshing. Batiste’s reading of *Stormy Weather*, which I know well, gave me new things to think about. But some readers may find Batiste’s focus at once a bit diffuse and a bit narrow. Because of the variability of her archive, chapters can be very different in their depth, and Batiste doesn’t extend her readings or her argument past 1944, the year of *Stormy Weather*. The extensive prologue and introduction in *Darkening Mirrors* do an excellent job of laying out the book’s concerns and ideas. It is testament to the book’s strengths that I wanted more of a conclusion—not a resolution of the complexities and contradictions Batiste so vividly describes and analyzes, but rather some suggestions about how she saw African American engagements with imperial representation in performance continuing—or not—after World War II.

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Jean-Claude William, Fred Reno & Fabienne Alvarez (eds.)*Mobilisations sociales aux Antilles: Les événements de 2009 dans tous leurs sens.*

Paris: Karthala, 2012. 370 pp. (Paper €28.00)

Mobilisations sociales aux Antilles represents an important contribution to the literature on the social protest movements that shook the French Antilles in 2009. As the editors note in their introduction, analyses of the protests written during or just after the events tended to stress the revolutionary nature of the movement. Three years later, however, the initial enthusiasm has subsided on the islands and scholars are better able to gauge what was accomplished.

This book brings together the insights of scholars of Guadeloupe, Martinique, and the French Pacific. The contributors take a variety of approaches, ranging from historical (Jacques Dumont) to anthropological (Yarimar Bonilla) to linguistic (Bernard Phipps), but focusing on perspectives from political science (Éric Nabajoth, Julien Méron, Fred Reno, Boris Samuel, Jean-Claude William, Paméla Obertan, Nathalie Mrgudovic). The book's goal, as stated in the introduction, is to understand the meanings that the events had for the people involved. Chapters cover the events in both Martinique and Guadeloupe, with only brief mention of the parallel protests in French Guiana at the same time. The result is arguably the most in-depth and wide-ranging analysis of these events to date.

While each chapter has its own focus, several themes appear across the volume. One is that the movements emerged in response to processes associated with neoliberal global capitalism (e.g., the chapters by Obertan and Alvarez). Several chapters also bring out the differences between the movements in Martinique and Guadeloupe. Edmond Mondésir and Danielle Laport highlight that in Martinique a collaboration of labor unions had been preparing the movement since 2007, but coming together in 2009 as the February 5 Collective (K5F), they focused on issues of the moment. More chapters deal with Guadeloupe, where a collective including labor unions and cultural and environmental associations organized a movement to fight against exploitation and the local effects of neoliberal globalization, with a wide-ranging set of demands that envisioned revolutionizing Guadeloupean society over time. In Guadeloupe, unlike in Martinique, a charismatic leader, Élie Domota, emerged as the spokesman for the collective, the LKP (*Lyannaj Kont Pwofitasyon*, "alliance against profiteering").

Several chapters address the role of different types of media in the movements themselves. Dumont suggests that one reason the events of 2009 stand out from other movements on the two islands is that they were presented on location and often live via the media. Olivier Pulvar discusses the Martinican

Télé Otonom Mawon (Autonomous Maroon Television) that reported from the streets of Fort-de-France on a local television station and on the Internet. Phipps studies the language used in the 2009 mobilization in Guadeloupe, noting how individuals such as Domota deftly played on the symbolism of using French vs. Creole in televised speeches and negotiations that took place.

Another dominant theme running through the chapters is the relationship to the state, at both the national and local levels. In their introduction, Reno, William, and Alvarez argue that one of the unintended consequences of the mobilizations was a reinforcement of the role of the state in local affairs (p. 7). Mérimon and Reno discuss how the movements failed to translate into political change. Mérimon stresses that social protest in Guadeloupe since Abolition has focused on a demand for equality, with a call for the recognition of a distinctive identity emerging more recently. Nabajoth contends that the movement of 2009 may be viewed as the end of the independence movement in Guadeloupe, since it called for recognition of Guadeloupean identity without demanding independence. As Reno and Mérimon observe, the results of local elections in Guadeloupe in 2010 contradicted the opinions expressed during the mobilization of 2009, as a primary target of criticism of the LKP, Victorin Lurel, obtained a resounding victory as president of the Regional Council in the first round of voting.

The connection between the events of 2009 and Antillean history is also a recurring theme. Dumont links the events of 2009 to earlier struggles on the islands and examines how local historians and cultural militants have mobilized Guadeloupean history. Bonilla explores how the UGTG labor union, which played a central role in the LKP, draws on the image of the maroon in understanding the meaning of their actions. Several contributors (William, Mondésir, Alvarez, Reno) discuss how the two movements foregrounded the fact that the descendants of the planter class today hold the economic reins on both islands, which means that criticism of the status quo was often interpreted as racism (see also the chapter by Mrgudovic). The movements also made reference to the islands' colonial past, problematizing their current relationship with France (see the essays by Phipps and Alvarez).

This volume's strengths lie in the diversity of perspectives presented and in the level of detail included. Scholars in political science, history, anthropology and Caribbean Studies more generally who are interested in the specific details of the 2009 movements and in statistics about French West Indian politics, economics, and society would do well to refer to *Mobilisations sociales aux Antilles*. Nabajoth's chapter stands out for its history of the Guadeloupean nationalist movement. The main weakness of the book is that, with a few notable exceptions, it fails to make clear why these movements would be

relevant to scholars of other societies. Obertan, however, does situate them with respect to social movements like the anti-globalization movement. Given the role of the 2009 movements in the ongoing debate about the administrative status of the overseas departments, this volume should prove invaluable to scholars for years to come.

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Clem Seecharan

Mother India's Shadow over El Dorado: Indo-Guyanese Politics and Identity, 1890s–1930s. Kingston: Ian Randle, 2011. xii + 524 pp. (Paper US\$45.00)

Clem Seecharan's *Mother India's Shadow Over El Dorado* is an ambitious compendium of his earlier work and ongoing research on Indo-Guyanese history, including over 500 pages of text comprised of 32 chapters divided among seven parts and a conclusion. While the abundance of (short) chapters allows Seecharan to look closely and chronologically at selected Indo-Guyanese activists' writing and speeches, it also engenders repetitiveness and a book of unnecessarily unwieldy dimensions. This is unfortunate, because it is a trove of fascinating information on the lively cultures of political self-fashioning and stakes-claiming in colonial Guyana. To assemble this, he mined official documents (which reflected metropolitan perspectives as well as those of resident or absentee white proprietors), but also predominantly urban Indo- and Afro-Guyanese community organizations' newspapers and their spokesmen's editorials, letters to editors, and other writings.

Seecharan frames his study of the persistent and increasingly polarized and racially-charged conflict between the two numerically largest ethnic groups in independent Guyana in terms of two distinct but overlapping clusters of ambition. The first is the lure of El Dorado, the durable colonial conviction that the region's abundance of natural resources promised incalculable wealth—if only there were labor enough to exploit them. This conviction precipitated the transportation of enslaved Africans and subsequently (with British abolition of slavery in its empire) of indentured Indians. Further, Seecharan notes, it continued to shape British colonial policy. Finally, he argues, intersecting with and crucially shaping these dynamics was (and is) the second formative myth: the invocation of "Mother India" by members of British Guiana's small but growing coterie of educated Indian-descended men. They animated contemporary Indology with their own ambitions and experiences (as first- or second-generation immigrants) to claim precedence over African-descended and European communities as stewards of El Dorado. In pursuing their vision—which included a proposal that the British Government of India rather than that in London be given responsibility for governing British Guiana and developing its inland resources—they alienated their African-descended counterparts, who understood, resented, and resisted their subordination in these schemes, to enduring effect through the twentieth century. This, then, is the shadow of "Mother India" over "El Dorado."

In tracking the crystallization of a distinctively Indo-Guyanese political imaginary between 1890 and 1930, Seecharan's discussion of spokesmen for

“Mother India” in the colony offers a thought-provoking glimpse into the circulation and deployments of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century orientalist scholarship. The strain that inspired Indo-Guyanese like Joseph Ruhomon (of the British Guiana East Indian Association, founded in 1894) posited a “Golden Age” of ancient Indic civilization engendered by central Asian conquerors about a thousand years BCE, recuperated through their “Aryans” texts. Study of these further suggested to comparative philologists and other scholars not only a linguistic kinship between Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin “mother” lodes of many South Asian and European languages, but also the former’s chronological priority. Seecharan demonstrates how Ruhomon and others built on popularizations of such scholarship to argue that the sons of “Mother India” (both in the “homeland” and in the Caribbean) were best suited to develop the rich promise of “El Dorado.”

Studies by anthropologists John Kelly and Martha Kaplan (working in Fiji) and Peter van der Veer and Steven Vertovec (working in the Caribbean) have generatively analyzed the influence of Hindu reformist missionaries associated with Swami Dayananda’s Arya Samaj (founded in the 1870s) on communities formed by migrants from India. Aisha Khan has done similarly nuanced work on Indo-Trinidadian Muslim identities. But these are nowhere to be found in *Mother India’s Shadow*. Seecharan’s discussion of his turn-of-the-twentieth-century Indo-Guyanese activists would have benefited from these scholars’ complex analyses of the different imperial contexts of production and reception in which these reformist discourses and emigrant identities developed.

Further, while Seecharan does not deny either the highly hierarchical racial assumptions implicit in such arguments or their polarizing effects in British Guiana, problematic assumptions in his own account of dynamics in India from the 1890s to 1930s cast a shadow over his analysis in this book, in which Islam, its influences and hundreds of millions of adherents are notable for their absence. Ossification of religion as the bedrock category for apportioning political representation in British India was proceeding in this very period. In this context, “Mother India” was (and indeed, judging from twenty-first-century Hindu nationalist rhetoric, still is) a loaded, highly partisan and distinctly Hindu emblem. Seecharan’s bibliography does not include scholarship on these or other political aspects of colonial or independent Indian history, leaving readers with a highly partial view of the complex genealogies of national identities in the subcontinent, in which—as scholars have convincingly demonstrated—the idea of India has never been either singular or stable. Careful perusal of *Mother India’s Shadow over El Dorado* demonstrates that Seecharan neither denies the effects, nor endorses the rhetoric of

exceptionalism evident in his selected (Indian and Indo-Guyanese) activists' and historians' speeches and writings. Given the book's heft and repetitiveness, however, Indian exceptionalism may well be what most readers take away from it.

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Gharetje G. Choenni & Chan E.S. Choenni

Sarnami Hindostani 1920–1960: Worteling, identiteit en gemeenschapsvorming in Suriname, volume 1. Amsterdam: KIT Publishers, 2012. 672 pp. (Cloth € 24.50)

The Lalla Rookh Diaspora Foundation published this book in order to rectify deficiencies in knowledge of the history of the Surinamese Hindustanis (East Indians). The publication of a second volume was planned for 2013, but has been postponed.

The book's introductory chapter deals with the departure of the Hindustanis from India, their life on the plantations, their numerical growth, their progress between 1920 and 1960, and the development of Sarnámi (a linguistic variation of Hindi). A chapter entitled "Settling and taking root" then relates the developments that took place after the contract period, when the Hindustanis created small villages of their own near their rice fields. The hardships of agricultural life are delineated as well as the diligence and perseverance of the settlers. The next chapter is devoted to transport, recounting how after some time many Hindustanis became active as wagoners, truck drivers, and bus drivers. The fourth chapter deals with the differentiation that took place when the children of the paddy farmers became entrepreneurs and craftsmen and later also government officials.

Chapter 5 is about housing. It paints the development from the plantation barracks to the simple dwellings in the villages and finally to the magnificent city houses of Paramaribo. It also describes the medical care the Hindustanis received. Chapter 6 discusses developments in education. Here attention is paid to the deterioration of the position of women in the third generation in Suriname. The setback was halted when later generations of women became better educated. This chapter also addresses the position of homosexual men and lesbians. The last chapter, which focuses on family life, paints the development of the joint family as well as its disappearance after the World War II and discusses Hindustani clothing, jewels, tattoos, food, and identity markers.

These seven chapters alternate with literary portrayals of seven elderly persons, a number of whom now live in the Netherlands, who reminisce about their lives in Suriname in the past.

Eighty in-depth interviews with elderly Hindustanis living both in Suriname and in the Netherlands form the main source of this book. The data they provide are subsequently checked in other (mostly written) sources. A reasonable number of Hindustanis say, for example, that the East Indians never asked for help from governmental social security, but the archives of these institutions prove that this is an exaggeration (pp. 16–17). So, the oral information is not blindly accepted, but critically evaluated. Choenni and Choenni call their

method triangulation, which means that they have tried to get a reliable image of the situation by consulting various kinds of sources. Therefore this study fits the recent trend among historians of giving attention to oral history as an important addition to the written sources composed mainly by the writing elite and by the people governing the country. One could say that oral history is the history of the oppressed, which certainly is something that pops up in the material of this book. It is full of stories about the hardships people suffered in India even before their transportation to the Caribbean, the oppression on the plantations, the poverty and lack of medical care in the first years on the plantations and in the new settlements, and the discrimination against Hindustanis by the other population groups of the country.

In spite of the book's merits, its sloppy writing style causes many inaccuracies. For example, the authors write that Columbus discovered Suriname (p. 37), which is untrue. Or again, there are many spelling errors or strangely written Dutch words, such as *Hinduïsme* instead of *hindoeïsme*. Other errors could have been prevented if the necessary academic literature had been consulted; people with the title *maharaj* are said to be *chattri's* (p. 645), while in reality they are Brahmins (Clarke 1967:178–80). And a description of the development of the Hindu literary tradition (p. 434) is colored by the views of some Hindu religious experts, but deviates from the findings of authoritative research on the subject. These errors reflect a failure to engage academic fields outside of the social sciences.

The book is a valuable source of information about how Hindustanis experienced important periods in their history rather than a thoroughly documented study. But there is no doubt that it provides much information about the experiences of the Sarnami Hindostani. I hope that the second volume will be based on more wide-ranging evidence. The postponement of its publication offers an opportunity to work this out.

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Angela Smith

Steel Drums and Steelbands: A History. Lanham MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012. xiv + 209 pp. (Cloth US\$ 65.00, Kindle US\$ 51.54)

This morning I read a story about Summly, an Internet news summary service created by a British teenager, Nick D'Aloisio. The app takes long news articles and summarizes them in 400 words. How could this be done? Wouldn't the result be chunky, much like the work of Internet translators? No, the prose is well written and clear. Judging from examples, what the app does is to pick out topic sentences from the longer article and go with that. This is exactly what *Steel Drums and Steelbands* feels like. Written by a professional writer, it is a clear, compact, nicely organized yet comprehensive history of pan (steelband). It is aimed at high school students, especially people who may know little about the topic.

The book is an easy and enjoyable read. It begins with the history of Trinidad, the arrival of African slaves, and the development of Carnival. It then covers the evolution of pan from drums, the tamboo bamboo, and biscuit tin bands to the tuned steel orchestras. Finally, there are chapters on the spread of "steel drums" abroad. Part I (the first fourteen chapters) is about pan in Trinidad. Part II (the last six chapters) covers steelband outside of Trinidad, mostly in the United States. Part II is useful as it focuses on the integration of steelband into American culture. It does not cover the extremely wide use of pan in the scores of Trinidad-style carnivals spread across the North American continent and throughout the world.

There is a plethora of appendixes. The first two consist of brief biographies of "pan pioneers" and "pan innovators." The third is a useful chronological guide to each of the chapters. The fourth consists of questions teachers might ask students. The fifth is a discography and Internet guide. A sixth offers a breakdown of the instruments in a typical steel orchestra. There is also a bibliography, an index, and a list of experts contacted by Smith while she was writing the book. Finally, there is an excellent section of photographs, most of them taken by Smith. (One great photo shows Eleanor Roosevelt with Kim Loy Wong, Trinidadian steelband pioneer in New York City after World War II.)

Unfortunately, there are a few problematic aspects to the book. One is the lack of notes. Quotes are sprinkled throughout the books and Smith has conducted many interviews, but the provenience of the references is not annotated. Appendix 5 consists of a brief discography and Internet links and there are more links in the bibliography, which seems to substitute for annotations. Taken together the bibliography (including the Internet sites) and the phone and email interviews strongly suggest that Smith based much of the book on

individual reminiscences and contemporary accounts of the steelband by participants. There is some attempt to judge and weigh these accounts, to separate the well-trodden and myth-laden history of pan with a more objective or considered view, but not enough. Also, there is little discussion about the steel orchestra's development in a larger social, cultural, and economic context. In other words, this is a book written by a fan, not a historian, anthropologist, folklorist, or other type of scholar.

Because this book is a popular rather than scholarly account of the history of pan, nuanced phrasing and factual errors jump out here and there. It is not possible to list them all but here are a few samples. The use of "steel drum" might rankle some Trinbagonians, who prefer the word "pan." "Steel drum" is the phrase commonly used outside of Trinidad, including second-generation islanders, and its use suggests that the topic is being viewed from afar. On page 60, Smith refers to "Tobago, rumored to be the island where Robinson Crusoe lived." Smith knows that Crusoe is a fictional character, I am sure, but many other places also claim to be the setting for Defoe's novel. Later in the same paragraph Smith refers to Tobago in the 1800s as a "country," not a colony. Another error is the quote of lyrics to "Rum and Coca Cola" in an epigraph (p. 41), presumably written by Rupert Grant, a.k.a. Lord Invader. Only the chorus (which is garbled and should read, "Go down Point Cumana ...") is Invader's lyric; the rest was written by the most important plagiarizer of the rest of the lyrics, Morey Amsterdam (who lost his case to Invader, in a New York court). Invader received a large cash settlement, although Amsterdam and his confederates retained copyright of the lyrics. That is, Invader wrote nearly all the lyrics to the song and Amsterdam did indeed copy Invader's lyrics in other verses, but this particular verse, ironically, is Amsterdam's, not Invader's!

And there is more. On page xv and again on page 46, Smith asserts that "Calypso and pan were both borne [sic.] of the African slave culture." This is an oversimplification. Calypso and pan are not reformulations of "slave culture," but new creations involving the efforts of formerly enslaved Trinidadians, once indentured Africans in Trinidad, Afro-Caribbean immigrants from nearby islands, and others.

This book will likely become the quick reference of choice on pan. But whenever it conveys basic facts about pan history, inaccuracies pop-up. Should the novice get a quick "take" about the steelband from this book and then turn to more scholarly works for a deeper understanding? I began this review with a metaphor about an Internet algorithm. In the last few years I've read too many student papers that also look like Internet algorithms. So it is that an Internet-based folklore is established. Easily accessible "facts" will be picked up by casual readers and I'm afraid by scholars as well, and these errors will

be stamped out in thousands of copies, each feeding on the other. So instead of this study, I recommend Kim Johnson's *From Tin Pan to TASPO* (2011) for a more accurate account of the roots of the steelband movement. For a study of the more recent steel band there is Ann Lee's 1994 Ph.D. dissertation, "The Steelband Movement and Nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago," and Steve Stuempfle's *The Steelband Movement* (1995).

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Robert Wyndham Nicholls

The Jumbies' Playing Ground: Old World Influences on Afro-Creole Masquerades in the Eastern Caribbean. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2012. xx + 293 pp. (Cloth US\$ 55.00)

The myriad Carnival, Christmas, and other masquerades of the Caribbean have been the subject of much research over the past couple of decades. With *The Jumbies' Playing Ground*, Robert Nicholls adds to this growing scholarship by offering a detailed examination of early forms of masquerading in the Eastern Caribbean. His focus on the Leeward Islands, especially the Virgin Islands, is an important contribution, since folklorists and anthropologists have devoted somewhat less attention to performance traditions in these territories. His central thesis is that “masquerade prototypes in the Leeward Islands were formed primarily from a fusion of styles from the Upper Guinea region of West Africa—loosely defined as stretching from Senegal to the northwestern Ivory Coast—and Western Europe, especially Britain’s West Country and Scotland, Ireland, and Wales” (p. 25). He argues that peoples from these African and European regions were among the first to arrive in the post-Columbian Leewards (and Barbados) and that they established masquerade models that were then gradually modified by diverse populations.

In the late 1970s, Nicholls carried out field research on performance traditions of the Iggede people of Benue State in southeastern Nigeria. This West African experience, along with wide-ranging knowledge of Western European folk traditions, guides his perspective on Leeward Island forms. His book is essentially a compilation and analysis of descriptions of Caribbean and Old World masquerades drawn from travel and plantation literature, local history publications, anthropological and folkloristic studies, and festival ephemera. It also includes material from interviews conducted with veteran masqueraders (mainly from the Virgin Islands) and numerous helpful color and halftone photographs. Through an examination of details of material style, performance, and symbolic significance on both sides of the Atlantic, Nicholls suggests possible cultural continuities, while acknowledging that “the issue of determining ancestry is fraught and loaded and in most cases is tentative at best” (p. 43). He does not attempt to provide sustained accounts of the creativity and historical development of masquerades in the context of specific social conditions of individual islands. Analysis of the performance of these masquerades at present is also outside the scope of his book, though he does note instances of their continued existence within festivals in the contemporary Caribbean.

Nicholls investigates diverse festive performance traditions in the Leeward Islands, with particular attention to bush masquerades, bull masquerades, and Mocko Jumbies. The bush masquerade, sometimes referred to as a “bear,” involves a shaggy, full-body costume made with burlap, raffia, or other vegetal material. A bull masquerader also generally wears a burlap or vegetal costume, along with a mask and a headpiece with horns. The Mocko Jumbie employs stilts and typically wears colorful trousers or a woman’s dress, a mask, and a tall hat. The bush and bull masqueraders are frequently accompanied by handlers with whips, while Mocko Jumbies themselves often carry whips. In assessing the possible roots of these traditions, Nicholls discusses bush and horned masquerades among such groups as the Upper Guinea Mandinka and Jola, as well as in the British Isles and other European locales. Meanwhile, he traces the Mocko Jumbie to various Upper Guinea peoples and suggests some Igbo influence but minimal European antecedents. Along with these investigations, he also considers such masquerades as horse figures, clowns, Mother Hubbards in St. Croix, the mummies (mummers) of St. Kitts and Nevis, and the Sensay of Dominica.

Nicholls examines this variety of Leeward Island masquerades in the context of Christmas season festivity and other special occasions in the calendar year, and describes itinerant processions, choreographies, accompanying musical instruments (such as drums and fifes), and customary exchanges of performances and gifts. He also discusses the entertainment and social control functions of masquerading in the Caribbean, West Africa, and Western Europe. Finally, he is especially intrigued by possible spiritual dimensions of masquerades and references the work of Kenneth Bilby (e.g., 2010) on deep spiritual elements within ostensibly secular Jonkonnu traditions. Old World antecedents of this religious significance include the use of masquerades in West Africa to represent or communicate with spirits in the context of such events as initiations and funerals, and European mumming traditions which are sometimes interpreted in terms of good luck.

Nicholls’s exhaustive research on masquerading in the Eastern Caribbean, West Africa, and Western Europe provides substantial evidence of transatlantic continuities and synthesis in artistic form, function, and symbolism. Given the mass of details compiled, however, the book can be a challenge to read. Paragraphs sometimes seem like lists that include instance after instance of the manifestation of a particular masquerade in diverse places and times. In addition, there is considerable repetition of information across the chapters. Nonetheless, this study greatly expands the documentary record of masquerades in the Leeward Islands and offers a wealth of material for comparison with festive traditions elsewhere in the Caribbean.

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Mamadou Diouf & Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo (eds.)

Rhythms of the Afro-Atlantic World: Rituals and Remembrances. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010. 292 pp. (Cloth US\$70.00)

In their introduction, editors Mamadou Diouf and Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo eloquently characterize the essays in *Rhythms of the Afro-Atlantic World* as “interventions ... that restage and revise aesthetic, corporeal, aural, cultural, and political conversations about Africa, Europe, and America that have been going on at least since the beginning of the Atlantic slave trade” (p. 15). This ambitious volume, which emerged out of the University of Michigan Atlantic Studies Initiative, addresses the way circum-Atlantic communities recollect and reconfigure their histories through creative performance. The broad-ranging compilation features substantive contributions from more than fifteen authors, and spans the performative geographies of Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, and the Americas. The book is organized into three parts: “Religion,” “Dance,” and “Contemporary Music,” each of which presents a collection of multilayered and nuanced circum-Atlantic performative scholarship.

In “Religion,” Yvonne Daniel deftly lays the groundwork for understanding how Cuban dance, and especially sacred Afro-Cuban dance, has contributed to the Cuban national project of attracting foreign tourism while maintaining its roots in sacred performance. She pinpoints how dance has benefited all sectors of the tourist industry—from sacred performers, to audience members, to dance company administrators, to tour group leaders, to the economy itself—showing that Cuban dance, tourists, and the Cuban economy are each “fortified” by the vitamins of Cuba’s sacred African roots. Melvin Butler provides an intriguing ethnographic portrait of the complexities of Jamaican religious identity, showing how African American gospel music and Jamaican reggae rhythms have filtered into Jamaican Pentecostalist religious performance, creating new and contested ways of performing religious belonging. While Pentecostalist preachers decry the “worldliness” and secular contexts in which these musical genres are typically performed, Pentecostalist congregants defend their music, asserting that it is as “authentically religious” as the church’s traditional hymns and choruses. Deborah Smith Pollard’s essay focuses on “holy hip hop” in the United States, featuring interviews with pastors, performers, and congregants from Detroit, New York, and Philadelphia. According to teenage congregants, the main difference between holy hip hop and its secular counterpart is that in holy hip hop, “the women have on all their clothes.” The tension between “church” and “street” behavior is reminiscent not only of the issues raised in Butler’s article, but of the thin line between gospel music and rhythm and blues,

and of the porous boundary between sacred and profane that is particularly germane to Afro-Atlantic performance.

"Dance" features the work of four authors—Yvonne Daniel, Lucía Suárez, Susan Leigh Foster, and Millery Polyné—and provides wide-ranging examples of embodied remembrances. Daniel offers a comparative perspective on the African-based dance traditions of Cuba, Haiti, and Brazil, focusing on the gestures and utterances that convey sacred presence and sacred knowledge. Lucumi, Vodou, and Candomble share a coastal West African ancestry, and Daniel elegantly demonstrates the important structural similarities in the regions' music and dance. In a far-reaching essay that ranges from dance to film to social programs, Lucía Suárez asserts that Brazil's complex history is embodied in the prolific choreography of modern urban dance company Grupo Corpo, which not only remembers the often violent past of Brazil's bifurcated cities, but provides possibilities for a better future. Essays by Susan Leigh Foster and Millery Polyné both focus on iconic dancer/choreographers. In the format of a creative dialogue, Foster invites readers to enter into the choreographic processes of recollection and remembrance engaged in by African American dancer/choreographer Diana McIntyre and Senegalese dancer/choreographer Germaine Acogny, both of whom draw on African roots to empower their work. In a detailed historical study, Millery Polyné focuses on the efforts of African American dancer/choreographer Lavinia Williams and Haitian dancer/choreographer Jean Léon Destiné to bring Haitian folkloric dance to the forefront of Haitian—and global—consciousness in the 1940s and 1950s, using dance as a means to gain entry to the international political stage.

In "Contemporary Music," six authors present case studies of Afro-Atlantic popular music, analyzing music's power to reclaim and reshape identities. Through her theory of "connective marginality," Halifu Osumare offers a nuanced analysis of the way hip-hop cultures in Senegal and Kenya critique social and political dynamics, and challenges mainstream African-American hip-hop to realize the affective power of its music to create positive change. Raquel Rivera's richly ethnographic essay on the Haitianness of such "Spanish-Caribbean" genres as Puerto Rican *bomba* and Dominican *palos* in New York critiques the idea of *latinidad* as a panethnicity that "bleaches" the essential Africanness of Afro-Caribbean performance genres. Dierdre Gantt's detailed trans-Atlantic study compares Trinbagonian *soca* music and the "go-go" music culture of Washington DC, arguing that both genres have come to represent working-class blacks and, through their growing popularity, have contributed to the tourist industries of both locations. Patricia van Leeuwen's article astutely analyzes the place of marginalized "*rapso*" within the larger commercial context of Trinbagonian Carnival and its calypso perfor-

mance, tracing the roots of *rapso* to the resistant and subversive masquerade traditions of the colonial period. Umi Vaughan offers a deft and informed treatment of the Cuban popular music genre *timba*—examining it in terms of musical structure, instrumentation, lyrics, and social context—and concludes that *timba* remains an important forum for negotiating Cuba's identity both locally and globally. Juan Flores and René López “activate musical memories” of two groundbreaking salsa groups from the 1960s and 1970s—Conjunto La Perfecta and Grupo Folklórico y Experimental Nuevayorquino—and celebrate their current incarnations as innovative and *descarga*-based bands, steeped in the Afro-Latin rhythms of the Caribbean.

As Carroll Smith-Rosenberg writes in the epilogue, *Rhythms of the Afro-Atlantic World* “links traumatic and resistant memories to current creativity and political agency” (p. 273). True to the original mandate of the conference, the book interweaves disparate methodologies and perspectives, encourages discussion among Latin American, Caribbean, British, and African scholars, and opens the borders constraining U.S. history. Perhaps most important, the volume signals the underlying strength of performance: a deeply embodied refusal to forget.

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Aonghas St-Hilaire

Kwéyòl in Postcolonial Saint Lucia: Globalization, Language Planning and National Development. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2011. xv + 315 pp. (Cloth €110.00)

The title of this book leads one to expect a focus on the status of Kwéyòl in Saint Lucia and the effects of developments in the postcolonial period, but it offers much more. Aonghas St-Hilaire undertakes a sweep of the global terrain to review situations in which vernacular languages are spoken and analyzes globalization trends and language planning decisions that have affected the status of these languages. His presentation of the Saint Lucian situation is comprehensive and achieved through comparison with countries within the Anglophone and Francophone Caribbean and elsewhere. The work is structured as a rich layering of topics that unfold around the underlying theme of the decline of Kwéyòl as a consequence of the “intensified ... process of modern globalization and its aspects” (p. 8), including the ascendancy of English as a language of global communication.

St-Hilaire acknowledges the uncertain future of Kwéyòl in a context in which “parents emphasize English over the low status of Creole” with the result that “children no longer grow up with an active command of the vernacular,” but then immediately points to the possibility of reviving Kwéyòl “as an integral part of community and nation on the island” (p. xii). This approach emerges as a stylistic motif in the text so that a discussion of threats to the survival of Kwéyòl is juxtaposed with the presentation of statements expressing hope for its revitalization. The study enlisted sixty respondents from Castries (urban) and forty from Monchy (rural), a relatively small sample considering the population of Saint Lucia (160,000). This suggests that the views expressed by respondents which are used as “narrative data” (p. xv) may not broadly represent those of other communities. However, interviews with activists and other “specialist” groups include a subsample whose views add an important dimension to the narrative.

The introduction presents the linguistic background of Saint Lucia and explores how vernacular languages have fared within other nations, specifically in the context of education. Sections on globalization delineate the ascendancy of English within the Caribbean and other postcolonial societies. St-Hilaire makes the point that being “the only working language” within both the OECS and CARICOM “makes English further attractive vis-à-vis non-English vernaculars in the region” (p. 13). Here and throughout the text St-Hilaire refers to an impressive range of works that provide comparative data on the status of vernacular languages elsewhere. The citations enrich the narrative, providing a global comparison against which the status of Kwéyòl can be measured. This

introductory chapter clearly establishes the importance of language planning for aspects such as economic growth, cultural transformation, and the status of Creole languages.

Chapter 2 presents the historical background of colonialism in the Caribbean, the circumstances that led to the stigmatization of Kwéyòl, the policies that led to English only as the language of instruction in the country, and the attitudes that led to efforts to eradicate Kwéyòl because it was not considered a language (p. 55). It also deals with the indigenous peoples in the Caribbean, the conflicts between the British and French for possession of Saint Lucia, the trends that resulted in social stratification, and the decline of Kwéyòl as seen in the work of several writers.

Chapter 3 begins with a discussion of issues that have influenced the status of Kwéyòl. St-Hilaire explores Kwéyòl cultural nationalism in the context of decolonization and extends the discussion to global trends as a basis for comparison with developments in the Caribbean and more specifically in Saint Lucia. Focus on the development of important institutions like the Folk Research Centre, Jounen Kwéyòl festivities, and attitudes toward Kwéyòl introduces thematic strands that are further developed in subsequent chapters. Chapters 4 and 5 present developments related to Anglophone, Francophone, and Creolophone traditions in Saint Lucia, including the history of Francophone summits, cultural nationalism in various branches of global Créolophonie, and more importantly, the status of Saint Lucia in the Créolophonie movement which contributed to the development of a Kwéyòl orthography.

Chapter 6 presents the varying responses and approaches of successive governments and introduces a discussion of attitudes toward governance issues as they relate to Kwéyòl. Quantitative assessments of attitudes are rather vague, taking away from what is otherwise an impressively thorough study, as the following example on p. 138 shows:

Of those informants who wanted more governmental use of Kwéyòl, *several* expressed that both Kwéyòl and English should be given equal treatment by the government, *a large minority* expressed that increased governmental use of Kwéyòl would enhance the survivability of the language.

Chapter 7 is devoted to issues related to education, a dominant theme in the work. Again, using the testimonies of respondents in the comparative framework of global situations, St-Hilaire explores attitudes toward Kwéyòl, reviewing global trends with vernaculars, noting the policies implemented, and documenting efforts to promote the use of the language. Chapter 8 provides a

comprehensive review of Kwéyòl in the mass media, particularly developments in radio as a means of “helping the young nation not only to preserve Kwéyòl ... but also to break with the hegemonic discourses resonant of the colonial past” (p. 191).

Chapters 9, 10, and 11 focus on the changing status of Kwéyòl against the growing power of English and the possibilities offered by French. These chapters predict the further decline of Kwéyòl if actions to reverse the trend are not taken. “Kwéyòl ... is gradually succumbing to the growing island-wide influence of English, suggesting poor long-term prospects for the historically marginalized language, in spite of gains from pro-Kwéyòl cultural nationalism” (p. 218).

A concluding chapter pulls together the book’s argument on the inevitability of language death if steps to reverse the decline of Kwéyòl are not introduced, and suggests that success in other global contexts present possible ways in which Saint Lucia might proceed. It concludes with specific recommendations for such a reversal, citing the mass media, expanding the use of Kwéyòl in the public sector, and education that includes Kwéyòl, English, and French. The Seychelles and Mauritius are used as successful examples that prompt the recommendation in the closing statement of the book (p. 282):

Saint Lucia is well positioned to launch into greater national prosperity and individual citizen opportunity by integrating into the island’s institutions of social reproduction the means to promote multilingualism and literacy in multiple languages and to anchor the island’s national identity to the best of the global, regional, and local Anglophone, Kwéyòl-speaking, and Francophone cultures.

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Nicholas Faraclas (ed.)

Agency in the Emergence of Creole Languages: The Role of Women, Renegades, and People of African and Indigenous Descent in the Emergence of the Colonial Era Creoles. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2012. xiii + 246 pp. (Cloth US\$158.00)

This stimulating, challenging critique of traditional creolistics provides fresh insight into the complexity of the colonial world and the oft-forgotten role of subaltern societies. In the first chapter, “Marginalized Peoples, Racialized Slavery and the Emergence of the Atlantic Creoles,” Nicholas Faraclas & Marta Viada Bellido de Luna outline the major theme to be developed in the following seven chapters: Although marginalized groups—African and Indigenous—were denied agency in traditional studies of colonization, the whole volume adduces historical, demographic, and linguistic data showing how preslave and nonslave societies made essential contributions that shaped the matrix of creolization. Renegade communities, sailors, pirates, maroons, *lançados*, beachcombers, and indigenous populations of various ethnic backgrounds came together as *sociétés de cohabitation*—a term coined to define a new category based on, but distinct from Robert Chaudenson’s *sociétés d’habitation* and *sociétés de plantation*.

Chapter 2, “African Agency in the Emergence of the Atlantic Creoles” (by Faraclas and eight co-authors), refutes conventional assumptions about colonial societies—in particular, Eurocentric notions of monolingualism in the Caribbean, classifications of African languages that overlooked hybridity, and monocausal scenarios for language development (i.e., substrate, superstrate, universal).

Women have generally been invisible in discussions of creolization, but this book’s third chapter, “Women and Colonial Era Creolization” (by Faraclas), recognizes the agency of Indigenous and African women who held crucial interactive roles as consorts of European men. In addition, their daily subsistence and market activities put them in an ideal position to contribute to the creation and transmission of new forms of communication. But are there specific linguistic features of creoles that can be attributed to women? Faraclas identifies a feature common in Caribbean creoles—declarative rising intonation contours—that may reflect the influence of non-European feminized speech (present in Niger-Congo, but occurring also in Celtic, as well as in white middle-class American/British English). Defining feminized speech is a daunting task, considering the stylistic and social spectrum women (and men) control. The agency of women in language development is more likely to be found in their ability to adapt as mediators and communicators, a fundamental notion in creolization.

The following two chapters (both by Faraclas and Bellido de Luna) document the interactions between European and Indigenous populations. Chapter 4, “Indigenous Peoples and the Emergence of the Caribbean Creoles,” focuses on the historical and geographical context and Chapter 5, “Linguistic Evidence for the Influence of Indigenous Caribbean Grammars on the Grammars of the Atlantic Creoles,” on indigenous linguistic sources. Hybrid societies/*sociétés de cohabitation* were established in North America and the Caribbean (*palenques* in Hispaniola, Blue Mountain maroons in Jamaica, Afro-Indian Garinagu [“Black Caribs”] in the French Caribbean). Afro-Indigenous maroons created interisland networks that allowed linguistic diffusion throughout the Greater Antilles.

Chapter 5 compares a short list of general characteristics of English-based Caribbean creoles—mostly morphosyntactic (e.g., frequent use of topicalizers, serialization, copular constructions, and TMA system)—to similar linguistic features in North Arawakan languages. The examples are drawn from three Amazonian languages—Maipure, Tariana, Bare—as well as from Garifuna, the only related language spoken in the Caribbean region (Belize and Honduras), which Faraclas classifies as Arawakan. (I believe that this classification is problematic, since Garifuna has a large Carib component and has also assimilated a great deal of French, English, and Spanish. Garifuna is clearly a *hybrid* language.) However, the authors conclude that Atlantic Creole features may be “the result of convergence between Arawakan, West African and ... non-standard West European grammatical patterns” (p. 148). The copular construction (i.e., absence of copula) is considered to be crucial evidence of Arawakan influence because it does not occur in West African languages. But this interpretation is somewhat weakened by the fact that some of the “creolized and pidginized varieties of African languages that the slaves brought with them” (p. 49) may have lacked copular constructions and thus contributed to the process of creolization. Regardless of the interpretation, we can only agree that “the importance of indigenous languages in the genesis of Atlantic Creoles can no longer be ignored” (p. 148).

Chapter 6, “*Sociétés de cohabitation* and the Similarities between the English Lexifier Creoles of the Atlantic and the Pacific” (by Faraclas, Micah Corum, Rhoda Arrindell & Jean Ourdy Pierre), is an interesting, well-documented validation of the Atlantic to Pacific linguistic diffusion. It draws on a large sample of historical and linguistic sources, and contributes effectively to the major theme that heteroglossic *sociétés de cohabitation* must hold a central place in any study of creolization. Chapter 7, “Influences of Houma Ancestral Languages on Houma French” (by the United Houma Nation and eight supporting authors), focuses on some phonological features that suggest Indigenous

(mostly Muskogean) influence in a variety of French spoken by the Houma Nation in Louisiana. The appendix includes an excellent eight-page data transcript of a conversation in Houma French.

The final chapter, “Marginalized Peoples and Creole Genesis: *Sociétés de cohabitation* and the Founder Principle” (by Faraclas and eight others), is a critique of the hypothesis that Founder populations determine the language evolution—an approach notably used by Chaudenson and Salikoko Mufwene to show that Réunionnais was inspired by French vernaculars, thus denying African agency. Faraclas reiterates in this context the central theme of the book, namely that dominant colonial models of society obliterate the essential roles played by the mixed societies where Europeans did not predominate, and thus warp our interpretation of creole societies. I entirely agree. The contributors to this book have opened new, challenging perspectives into the history of the “multiplex matrix” from which Caribbean Creoles emerged that will be inspiring not only to linguists (especially creolists), but also to anthropologists and historians.

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The Languages of the Amazon. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. xxxiii + 514 pp. (Cloth US\$160.00)

Amazonia is one of those words that immediately conjures up exciting and exotic peoples with elaborate feathered headdresses and intricately painted bodies, peoples whose deep histories are barely known to us and whose ontologies defy classification into Western paradigms. The approximately 350 languages of Amazonia are equally exotic and have been subjected to increasingly intense scholarly study over the past twenty-five years. Including the roughly thirty-three languages that elude classification, thus constituting their own language family, approximately fifty genetic units are recognized in Amazonia, of which about fifteen form larger genetic units.

The Languages of the Amazon sets out to provide an accessible resource on the linguistic heritage of Amazonia for students of linguistics, anthropology, and Latin American studies, as well as interested general readers. Aikhenvald defines her area as “Greater Amazonia,” covering an expanse of almost seven million square kilometers, from the Amazon Basin up and into the Orinoco Basin. She points out that several features of the Amazonian languages extend beyond this area into what she terms the Circum-Amazonian region, which includes, for example, the Chibchan sphere in the Intermediate Area, and the Circum-Caribbean. In the preamble, Aikhenvald correctly states that this book is not an exhaustive tool for the study of this immensely diverse area, yet one cannot help but be grateful that she undertook the mammoth task of providing a well-organized, informed, and informative reference book to complement her earlier book, *The Amazonian Languages*, co-edited in 1999 with R.M.W. Dixon.

The Languages of the Amazon presents new insights and information gleaned from the most recent publications and the plethora of descriptive linguistic studies carried out in Amazonia over the last two decades. It gives an excellent overview of the very special linguistic features and quirks that are endemic to the area and that exhibit varying degrees of complexity, such as the ubiquitous nominal tense marking for past and future (“A former house and a wife-to-be,” p. 158), frustrative “in vain” marking, and systems of evidentiality, whereby speakers are required to specify their source of information when making a statement about a state of affairs.

The book contains fourteen chapters of varying lengths, several tables and diagrams, eighteen maps, a glossary of terms used, and three indexes that allow for detailed searches of particular subjects, languages and language families, and authors, as well as a 46-page bibliography. Six of the chapters have boxed

insets with extra factual information and/or anecdotes aimed at livening up the book, and several chapters have sections with further sources to consult on general historical or ethnographic topics. Chapter 1 provides general information on Amazonia's language families and peoples and their histories pre- and post-conquest. Chapter 2 focuses on language contact and linguistic areas. The rest of the chapters deal with various linguistically salient features: the sound systems; word structure; nouns; verbs; grammatical relations; valency-changing strategies; evidentiality; genders and classifiers; serial verb constructions; sentence formation; stylistic features of Amazonian languages (including numeral systems, speech styles, male and female speech, and mixed languages such as Island Carib); and finally, a succinct summary of the book called the "treasures of Amazonian languages." Although Aikhenvald intends this final chapter as a revelation of what still remains to be investigated, it is rather more a state-of-the-art summary, without specific topics being earmarked as those requiring further study. However, given that almost every feature dealt with in the book could be the topic of a more detailed analysis, this is merely an oversight and does not take away from the general usefulness of the book. Moreover, Aikhenvald has published several in-depth monographs or edited books on the various topics presented in this volume. It is to her credit that she was able to press this vast amount of information into such a neat format.

For all the major positive attributes that this book has, the first half of Chapter 1, which provides an historical overview and some information on the social structures of Amazonian groups, is clearly the weakest part of the book, containing a few factual errors and/or omissions and several inconsistencies in the spellings of names of languages and countries. For example, the language Aikhenvald refers to throughout as Carib, which in more modern works is referred to as Kari'na, a name the people themselves prefer to use, is given as Karina (p. 33), Karinya and Kariña (p. 63) and Cariña (p. 118). A discussion of language and language family names points out that where a specific language name is also used to refer to the family, most linguists use the -an suffix to distinguish the two, giving as an example Tucano versus Tucanoan. More the pity that she did not apply this to the Cariban family so that we could avoid ambiguous and/or rather incorrect phrases such as "the Carib-speaking Makushi." The factual errors or oversights reflect Aikhenvald's lesser familiarity with the northern Amazonian area, specifically the Guianan and Circum-Caribbean areas. Many sweeping statements such as "All Amazonian groups are patrilineal. ... Most are virilocal" do not apply further north where several Cariban groups still practice mainly uxorilocality. Likewise, it is misleading to say, "Across Amazonia, a firearm is called *mukawa*, a loan from Nhêngatú, or Língua Geral" (p. 18). Across the Guianas (with the exception of Wapishana, which indeed refers to

a firearm by a term cognate with *mukawa*, namely *mokao*), a firearm is referred to as *arakabusa*, an early Spanish loan. As shown in Nordenskiöld (1922:95–105), no group south of the Amazon uses an *arakabusa* cognate, but the area where *arakabusa* is used is an “unbroken” area practically from the mouth of the Amazon to the east bank of the Orinoco. These criticisms may seem minor, but the implications are less so. Should we be rethinking the usefulness of taking Greater Amazonia as a unit? And should we be giving more consideration to the natural grouping of northern Amazonian peoples whose linguistic and cultural histories differ sufficiently to warrant closer attention than they have received in this book?

These criticisms, however, do not take away from the fact that *The Languages of the Amazon* will provide a valuable resource for linguists and anthropologists alike for many years to come.

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Basil A. Reid (ed.)

Caribbean Heritage. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2012. x + 394 pp.
(Paper US\$40.00)

Caribbean Heritage promises a multidisciplinary contribution that exposes through twenty-five essays the diverse contemporary perspectives on Caribbean heritage. It probes the rich range of heritage, from cultural to natural and tangible to intangible, in the Anglophone Caribbean, principally the two-island nation of Trinidad and Tobago. The topics covered include, among others, symbolism, literature, linguistics, pedagogy, philanthropy, natural history, ethnobotany, land tenure, townscapes, archaeology, and museology. Patrick Bryan and Basil Reid introduce the collection by voicing dissatisfaction with the common definitions of heritage and proposing a less neutral, more inclusive one that unlocks the rich plurality of the concept.

Part I, "Intangible Heritage," begins with "Anansi: An African Legacy Bridging Time, Spaces and Spirits," in which Claudius Fergus critically analyzes the cultural resilience of Anansi, the Ashanti spider god and trickster figure in the Creole lexicons and stories of the African diaspora in the Caribbean. The multivocality and embrace of multiple perspectives endorsed in the volume informs Béatrice Boufoy-Bastick's call for a postmodernist view of Caribbean heritage. Identifying and managing heritage is a contested and complex process that requires the involvement of different ethnic and religious groups, as Bridget Brereton makes clear in detailing the case of the highest national award in Trinidad and Tobago, the Trinity Cross, and the way it reflects ideas about heritage and nationalism in a multicultural and multireligious Caribbean context. In "The Politics of Perspective: Counter-Discourse and Popular Romance within the Caribbean," Karen Sanderson-Cole treats the subject of counter discourse in historic/popular romance in the Caribbean, showing specifically how Valerie Belgrave's *Ti Marie* contributes to a new Caribbean consciousness. The following two essays, one by Susan Herbert and another by Ian E. Robertson and Beverly-Anne Carter, discuss a culturally relevant pedagogy in which bridges can be built between traditional and contemporary scientific epistemologies in the classroom and traditional proverbs can be adopted in the educational system. In "Caribbean Languages and Caribbean Linguistics," Jo-Anne S. Ferreira provides an overview of the rich linguistic panorama in the Caribbean, discussing the dangers it faces and actions taken to ensure its preservation. Essays by Gerard H. Rogers and Lorraine M. Nero then discuss the heritage preservation and dissemination efforts of the Alma Jordan Library of the University of West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, in Trinidad and Tobago and examine postcard images of Trinidad and Tobago held in this library,

highlighting their heritage value as windows onto the social and cultural history of these islands.

Part II, "Philanthropy" includes just two essays. Inette Cambridge analyzes the important legacy of philanthropist Audrey Lane Jeffers, and Margaret D. Rouse-Jones and Estelle M. Appiah examine the case of reverse migration of Dominica native George James Christian to the Gold Coast, arguing for his importance to nation building in the Caribbean. In Part III, "The Natural Environment and Plant Uses," Judith Gobin discusses the sea as common Caribbean heritage; Courtenay Rooks and Gregor Barclay present an overview of the natural history of Trinidad and Tobago; Gregor Barclay discusses the medicinal plants of these islands; and Laura B. Roberts-Nkrumah examines Caribbean food plants, an often neglected heritage. In Part IV, "Land Tenure and Built Heritage," Charisse Griffith-Charles and Sunil Lalloo discuss the "family land" form of land tenure as a valuable part of Caribbean heritage that deserves attention and preservation efforts. Elizabeth Pigou-Dennis examines extant images of Jamaican Port Antonio's past and the evolution of its townscape, offering interpretations of the way these serve particular agendas with respect to colonization, creolization, and collective memory. In a more pragmatic contribution, Brent Wilson exposes the urgency of addressing precarious cracks in the structure of Brimstone Hill Fortress, St. Kitts. The often overlooked and underappreciated industrial heritage of the Caribbean is explored by Allison C.B. Dolland and Clement K. Sankat.

In Part V, "Archaeology and Museology," Margaret E. Leshikar-Denton and Della A. Scott-Ireton focus on the various exemplary maritime heritage management strategies employed in the Cayman Islands. Andrea Richards offers a concise assessment of Jamaica's movable cultural heritage and a proposal for how to regulate it. The final two essays, one by Alissandra Cummins and one by Kevin Farmer and Alissandra Cummins, discuss the colonial origins and commercial and political overtones of museums in the Caribbean and the role of independence and postindependence era museums in decolonization and the forging of a new Caribbean nationalism and national identities.

Taken together, this volume's essays suggest that heritage can be considered virtually limitless. They range broadly in scope, from overviews such as those by Rooks and Barclay, Ferreira, and Robertson and Carter, to more analytical contributions involving fresh research such as those by Sanderson-Cole, Herbert, and Pigou-Dennis, among others. This aspect reflects the integration of various visions of heritage, from the regional to the local, from the general to the specific, and from informative texts to the more scientifically detailed, offering a balanced view of both extremes of heritage study and the shades of grey in between. The collection is a valuable contribution to the study of Caribbean

heritage of the Anglophone islands, underlining the social importance and cultural value of heritage within its specific sociocultural contexts as well as its broader Caribbean setting. Written in a style that will both satisfy academic readers and appeal to the lay public, it provides people from the Anglophone Caribbean and beyond a published testimony to the diversity of their rich heritage.

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